How They Worked Their Way



MAURICE F. EGAN

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"Father Jasper," cried Claus, opening his eyes, "oh, I have waited for you so long! I was afraid Our Lord would be lonely."—Page 232.

How They Worked Their Way

AND OTHER TALES.

(*STORIES OF DUTY.*)

By MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN, LL.D.,

Author of "The Life Around Us," "The Theatre and Christian Parents," etc.

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NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO:
BENZIGER BROTHERS,
Printers to the Holy Apostolic See.
1892.

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H. J. K. May 25, 1906

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

"LEE" AND MARIA,

TWO VERY LITTLE GIRLS, WITH THE HOPE
THAT THEY MAY LIVE TO READ
AND LIKE IT.

A LITTLE CHAT.

THE author of this book had been asked over and over again to write a book of stories for some of his little friends. He had told them stories over and over again, and even translated several from the French for them; but they were not content. They wanted more.

They wanted a book which they could have for "their own,"—to read when they liked. And they wanted a book about American children; and Helen said—Helen is ten years of age—she wanted a book in which there should be something about Catholic children, "like ourselves."

John, who is four years older than his sister, asked that the book might be full of real people, not about people who were so good that they were always preaching. And he wanted boys like himself in it,—boys who liked to have fun, and who were "on the altar," and who lived in ordinary houses, like most of the boys he knew. He did not want to read of princes, and counts, and little peasants; he would like to meet some Catholic American children in a book. Then Helen said that *St. Nicholas* and *Wide Awake* were lovely, but one never read anything about children who made their First Communion, or gathered flowers for the Blessed Virgin, or walked in the procession on Corpus Christi. *She* would like to read about the children she knew.

"You know," Helen said, "that Catholics have so many ideas and practices different from other people; but we seldom read about children who understand them, except in the French books. And I am sure good French children are nice enough; but I get tired of them in stories. I want to read about American children."

This "want" was repeated over and over to me by five children out of the six who were sitting with me near the drive in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, one Corpus Christi day. The sixth—one of the very little girls to whom this book is

dedicated—said, when she was asked what kind of stories she liked, that she wanted stories about "bad children," and expressed a decided preference for "Hop o' my Thumb." She was promptly ruled out of the conference when it was found that she liked "Hop o' my Thumb," because so many children had their heads cut off!

The oldest of all the children, Will, whose long sickness had helped to make him the most thoughtful, hoped that some lessons of the Catechism would be explained in the proposed book. The others exclaimed against this, insisting that the Catechism was too "dry" to put into a story without spoiling it. The author, however, adopted Will's suggestion in "Working their Way."

The exquisite day in June wore on in the Park; but before the drive became dim in the twilight, the author had begun to tell "The Boys in the Block" to the little group. It pleased the boys, but the girls were not content, because more was not said about Nina, to whom they took a liking. Little Maria grew tired of asking about the "papas" and "mammas" of the various characters, and went to sleep. The story was voted good enough to be put into the book. On many Sunday afternoons the stories were continued in the Park, until the author began to feel like the princess in the "Arabian Nights." At last they were all told and ready to be put between covers. At a last meeting the children suggested names for the book. Helen wanted something sweet, like "A Bunch of Wild Flowers;" John proposed "Through Flood and Fire;" and Maria, for some strange reason, insisted that *her* book should be called "Nellie;" but these suggestions were disregarded when Will said that the title ought to be "Stories of Duty," because the necessity of doing God's will and having a sense of it in our daily life seemed to be the motive of the book.

If any of you of the larger group who read these stories can think of a better title, the author of them will be glad to hear it.

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

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HOW THEY WORKED THEIR WAY.

I.

THE main question with the family was, "Where shall we send the boys to school?" The family consisted of six Beresfords—Dermot, Brian, Mary, and Kathleen; the father and mother completed the family. The children looked upon the father and mother as the best and greatest people in the world. The boys were sure that what their father could not do was not worth doing, and the girls clustered around their mother like buds around a rose, or bees around a bed of pansies.

It was a pleasant picture when the family gathered at the breakfast-table in the morning. The sunlight streamed through the dining-room windows on the group at the round table, and flashed on the snowy cloth and bright silver. It was Mary's business to see that the table looked nice, and it was rarely, indeed, that she did not contrive to have a bunch of flowers in the centre, and one or two beside her mother's plate.

In summer their city "yard"—it was literally not much more than three feet square—gave her daisies and pansies and a sprig of larkspur.

In the autumn some chrysanthemums, and in the winter, geraniums, which were tenderly cherished in the bay-window of the sitting-room. Always, however, the best flowers of the season were set at the feet of the statue of the Blessed Virgin, in an alcove of their sitting-room.

It is needless to describe the character of the young Beresfords. They had some of the faults and some of the virtues usually ascribed to American children. In the course of their story, you will become acquainted with their faults and their virtues.

Mary was just fifteen years of age; Brian and Dermot, the twins, were one year younger; Kathleen was twelve.

Mr. Beresford sat at the breakfast table on a certain morning in spring, and looked at the bright faces on either side of him. Mr. Beresford's hair had begun to turn gray of late, and when the sunlight fell on his face, Mary so lovingly observant, noticed that the wrinkles near his eyes made a net-work of fine lines. He looked a little anxiously at his wife, said grace, complimented Mary on the bunch of wisteria on the table, and then said—

"I have news for you, children."

"Good news?" said the twins.

"I don't know," said Mr. Beresford. "Mary

will probably consider it good news, but I cannot say what you boys will think of it."

"You have found a school for us!" cried Dermot, looking up anxiously. "I knew it must come some day. I wish we could stay here in Philadelphia and go to school"

Mrs. Beresford smiled sadly.

"Ah, dear boys," she said, "the going to a good school ought to make you glad. It is all very well for you to begin to have forebodings when there is talk of sending you away. But I think you would be gloomy in earnest, if you were told that father could not afford to send you to college at all. In fact, that you must turn in and work for your living at once." Mrs. Beresford's blue eyes filled with tears and her voice trembled a little.

Brian and Dermot dropped their spoons in surprise. Mary involuntarily said—

"I hope not!" and then blushed, for she had been taught not to give an opinion in the presence of her parents, when her opinion was not asked by them.

"Yes, boys," said Mr. Beresford, "your mother has hinted the truth. My business ventures in the West have gone wrong. The Stalacta Mine, in which all my earnings were invested, is a failure. Doctor Jarvis says that I shall die un-

less I get into the country as soon as possible. When I sell this house I may have money enough to buy a farm. I hoped, as you know, to send you to a good school for several years; but I cannot do it now. Well, well——how do you like the prospects of farming?"

Dermot said nothing, he hung his head, and if he had been a smaller boy, a tear would have dropped into his oatmeal porridge. He had counted on going to school. Will Allen, from Georgetown College, had been telling him of the good times there, and he had been reading Mr. Hughes' delightful "Tom Brown at Rugby." It was a great disappointment; he liked the city and he had never been in the country. He had caught glimpses of hot-looking men reaping or digging in sunny fields, and he had wondered how they could do it. But his observations of country life had all been made through the car windows when he was on his way to Long Branch. Besides, he had the antipathy to manual labor common in the American boy of his type. He had never done anything harder than tossing a ball in his life, and he felt his heart sink when his father talked of farm work.

Brian, on the contrary, was much relieved. He cared very little for the straight streets and the city sights. The bicycle, in which Dermot

delighted, had no charms for him. He wanted a horse. He cared nothing for a decorous ride through Fairmount Park, clothed in a tight shirt and knickerbockers. He read with pleasure of the wild flight of mustangs across Texan plains. He often said to himself that it was a shame for his father to be growing gray-haired over old law books and briefs in an office, while Dermot and he studied and played. His white hands filled him with disgust. He said he wanted to work.

Mary's eyes brightened.

"And I can really help mother! Oh, dear! I think farming will be nice!"

Mrs. Beresford shook her head.

"We shall be very poor."

"Why mother," said Mary, "haven't you told us often that if we were contented and good, poverty made no difference? We shall be all together. Isn't that enough?"

"But the poor boys' prospects!"

"Ah, my dear," said Mr. Beresford, "you forget that a farmer may fulfill all the duties of this life and gain Heaven quite as well as if he were a lawyer or a doctor. And I think if either Dermot or Brian have a vocation for the priesthood, neither your nor my example or words will stifle it."

Mrs. Beresford smiled.

"You are right, James."

"We can be just as near to God in the country as we are here, can't we, papa?" asked little Kathleen. "My Catechism does not say that we must live in the city. And I can say the whole first chapter by heart. Listen: 'God made me that I might know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world, and be happy with Him forever in the next.' See!" cried Kathleen, triumphantly.

"Kathleen has solved the problem for you, my dear," said Mr. Beresford, with a grave smile. "What we want is to serve the God who made us, here, with our whole hearts every day, and having done that, what matters the rest? It is a great sacrifice, for you all, to leave this fine house and the lively city; but I must ask it of you. It is my duty to save my life and health until these chicks of ours are able to take care of themselves. I think you will all help me."

Dermot went to his father and put his arms around his neck.

"Dear father," he said, with tears in his eyes, "I will do anything for your sake."

"For God's first, Dermot. Come now let us be cheerful and talk over our plans."

After this, they tried to be cheerful. But

the announcement had been so sudden, that all, except Brian and Kathleen, were occupied with sad thoughts.

II.

Mary went upstairs after breakfast and drew from a wardrobe a pretty white gown. It was soft,and, here and there, among its folds lay brilliant silver lace. She looked at it quite sadly. It had been given to her on her birthday. She had never yet worn it, and her father had promised to let her invite as many of her friends as she choose, in honor of his birthday, which would be late in May. But now that was all over. She could not remind her father of his promise. She knew that her mother was thinking of this disappointment, too, at the breakfast table.

Mothers suffer for all their children when times of trial come. Mrs. Beresford had felt Dermot's disappointment as keenly as she had Mary's. And she had felt it all the more keenly as Mary had tried so bravely to conceal it.

The sunlight shown on this pretty gown, and made the silver lace glisten like the reflections of light on a rippling stream. Mary sighed.

Alice Howe had given a party ; Agnes Rich-

ards had given a luncheon to all her young friends, and Mildred Ellis had had a delightful *musicale*, with singing by all her class in school, and a man to play the zither. The girls would think it strange, if she did not give them some chance of having a little fun before she went into the country. The tears came into her eyes. She felt tempted to ask her father; he would understand and let her have a feast on his birthday. She knew he would. But then he was so worried about other things. And then the expense! She heard his step sounding in his study. She would just run in and ask him. It would be so nice to wear that pretty frock. He always liked to see her look well. She made a movement towards the door.

Was she selfish? she asked herself. She looked at the Madonna and the Child that stood on a velvet-covered pedestal in one corner of her room. Sister Hortense and her dear mother had often told her that, in times of difficulty, she ought to say a Hail Mary, and to try to model her conduct to that of the Blessed Virgin.

She thought of her father's bowed head and the net-work of wrinkles around his eyes. She said her Hail Mary. Then, with a sigh, she put the soft gown back into its box and cried a little.

She had just wiped her eyes when a flutter

was heard on the stairs. Then a cheerful voice broke out, addressed to the house-maid—

"Never mind me, Delia; don't trouble yourself to show me her room. I know it. Here it is!"

A knock, very sharp and prolonged, startled Mary. She opened the door and a girl about her own age came in and kissed her violently. It was Alice Howe. Alice moved with as much vivacity as she could, considering that her dress was very tight, and that she had a little dog, which she led by a string, and which was trying to run away in various directions. Alice rumpled up her light, puffy "bang" before the mirror and then threw herself into a chair, while the curly dog snuffed around the room.

"Oh, dear!" she said, in an affected imitation of what she thought to be an English tone of voice, "I'm quite too awfully tired. You really ought to have an elevator—you really ought—in this big house. I've just run in to ask you to my luncheon, on the 28th."

"It will be quite too lovely. Mamma has ordered covers for twenty girls, and papa has promised me that the flowers shall be something *superb*. You must come, and wear your new frock."

Alice, a pleasant-looking girl, with wide-open blue eyes and yellow hair, was, unfortunately,

spoiled by affectation. She had all the airs and graces of a veteran woman of society. Her parents were too busy with other and less important matters to give her much attention.

Mary's manner was very simple, and childish, compared with the airs of Alice; but Mary could look one directly in the face, with a clear and honest gaze, while Alice's eyes, or her mouth, constantly showed the workings of self-consciousness, whenever she spoke to anybody.

"You are very kind, Alice," Mary answered, "but I think we will be out of town by the 28th."

"So soon! When are you going? It's just the time for Atlantic City, before the crush begins——"

"No, no," said Mary, hastily, "we are not going away for pleasure. Poor father is not well, and we are going into the country to live."

"Not for good!" cried Alice, opening her eyes with the approved "society" stare of the season.

"Yes."

"You can't mean it. What—are you to give up the riding club, and school, and the party you promised us. You certainly are crazy, Mary."

"The truth is," said Mary, with an effort and a slight blush, "we're too poor to live here."

Alice leaned back in her chair and laughed.

"This is quite too awfully funny! Fancy" —she said "fawncy"—"living in a house like this, with Mexican onyx mantel-pieces, and real lace curtains, and Turkish rugs, and talking that way! Papa often does the same thing, whenever I want him to buy me anything particularly smart. But mamma and I don't mind it! Poor! the idea! It's just your papa's talk!"

"No," said Mary, gravely, "father always means what he says. We shall all have to work hard on a farm somewhere."

"What!" cried Alice, "you *don't* mean it! Oh, this is quite too dreadfully, awfully, horrible! *you* churn, and milk the cows, and feed the pigs, and gather potatoes! Oh, my dear, your father can't be so awfully cruel! And you'll have no chance of wearing your new frock on a farm! Come, now, you do not mean it? The idea of your being poor, like the awful people I saw this morning!"

"Father said, this morning, that we must go away, and live very carefully," Mary answered, with an effort. "I suppose if one is poor, one may be good, and contented, and nice, if one tries."

"Impossible!" Alice said, running her fingers through her "bang," to show a diamond ring she wore. "Poor people never can be nice.

Just to think, of living in a little, poky house, with no servants, and having always to ride in a street car. Poor people are always nasty."

"Our Lord was poor. Sister Hortense told us, over and over again, to remember that. And the Blessed Virgin was poor."

Alice was silent for an instant.

"Oh, that was a long time ago. Don't preach, Mary, please. Just think of it—this morning, almost before I was up, mother came and asked me, if I had a white frock I didn't want. I was quite paralyzed by the question, for mamma knows, very well, that I want everything I have. It seems that a poor women, who lives back of our house, in the court, you know, had the impudence to ask mamma for a frock, so that her daughter could make her First Communion in white, like the other girls. To be fair, she only wanted to borrow one, and, having heard that I went to the convent to school, she thought mamma might lend her one of mine! Fancy! She said it would be a great favor, as she could not afford to buy a white frock. Did you ever hear of such a thing! I was real mad."

Mary was silent. A slight color came to her face.

"You aggravating thing," continued Alice, "you don't give a girl a bit of sympathy. Fancy

your washer-woman asking *you* for a gown. I guess you'd be real mad, too."

"No," said Mary, "I would not."

"But you see," cried Alice, "how insolent the poor are! And the woman and her daughter actually seemed surprised and mortified, when I told them I could not lend my clothes to strangers."

"Scarcely strangers, Alice. You must remember that—that—" Mary paused, afraid that she was "preaching." "I mean, that, as the girl was about to make her First Communion, it brought her nearer to you, or, at least——"

"What piety!" cried Alice, sarcastically. "I should like to see you lend her one of your white frocks—the new one, for instance!"

Mary walked over to the book-case and looked at the pretty rows of gilded books. Alice's words had struck home.

"The girl's name is Anna Doran. And she lives in Wilbert's Court. There, my dear child! Don't preach to me unless you practice. To change the subject, I shall have my new fan painted for your party. I have already finished a bouquet of jacquemnot roses, on a pale blue ground."

"Alice, believe me, there will be no more

parties, such as rich girls have, for me. We are poor. We shall all have to work."

Alice went close to Mary and looked into her face. She was struck by its gravity.

"I declare, Mary, you look quite old! Are you really in earnest?"

"Indeed I am!"

"Bosh!" cried Alice, "come live with me. You can have half my room and half the village-cart, except on Saturdays when I take papa out. Let the boys be poor; if they want to. You come and live with us."

Mary laughed.

"Oh, Alice, how silly you are! How could I leave father, and mother, and Kathleen. I must help them. I shall study hard, if I have to stay up all night. I know Sister Hortense will give me a list of books. I will practice a great deal, too."

"Poor people don't have pianos."

"Perhaps father may let me keep mine."

Alice threw herself back in her chair and laughed. She mimicked Mary's last sentence, over and over again, with much apparent enjoyment.

"Oh, dear," she cried at last, "you will kill me! Perhaps your papa may buy you a monkey,

and then, you can go about the streets *a l' Italienne* and help to support the family."

Alice saw a dangerous sparkle in Mary's eye, for Mary had by nature what is called a "temper," but she had been taught to subdue it.

"Well, good-bye, Mary. If you will take summer boarders when you go on the farm, I'll come. But I think it's real mean about your party. And all the girls will talk it over and say unkind things. It will be quite too awfully foolish!"

Alice kissed Mary on both cheeks and then bounded away.

Mary, left to herself, knelt down near the wide window-seat and cried. Her grief may seem a small thing to older people occupied with affairs that seem greater, but to her it was very bitter. To have all the girls, to whose entertainments she had been invited, over and over again, saying that Mary Beresford was too mean to keep her promise about the birthday party. They would talk about it in school. Sister Hortense would give her comfort, she knew; but then, Sister Hortense was not the girls, and she could not control their thoughts and speeches. It did look mean, Mary admitted to herself. She had talked so much about the party and her new gown.

She opened the box that enclosed that pre-

cious article. She said to herself that she would wear it; she would speak to her father and tell him that he ought to give her a last party, and how mean the girls would think her. How lovely the dress would look! If she could only wear it and have one more good time, in spite of everything. Some how or other, just then, little Kathleen's sing-song tune ran through her mind, repeating the answer in the Catechism to the question, "Why did God make you?"

Would it be serving God to worry her dear father just now, and, perhaps, coax him into spending money for luxuries that he really needed for necessities?

But Alice said she had promised to invite the girls to a party.

But then, her father had been rich. Now, he was poor. She had talked of the party as a fixed fact, but she had not invited anybody. No, she had not promised anything.

If she could only wear that lovely white frock—just once! But no—she must be a poor girl now, and not expect to go to parties in white gowns with silver trimmings.

Alice Howe's visit had disturbed her. It had made her uneasy and discontented. The incident of the child whose mother wanted to borrow the white frock, came into her mind. Ought she

to make a sacrifice and give up this beautiful gown?

She ran down to the sitting-room, a glorious room this morning, flooded with sunlight and gay with flowering plants. Her mother was reading "The Following of Christ."

"Well, Mary?" she said.

"Mother, Alice Howe has just been telling me of a poor girl who has no frock to wear at her First Communion, and I thought——"

Mrs. Beresford looked a little troubled.

"You know, my dear, we are not as we used to be, and I am afraid I have no white stuff that would do for such a dress. And I don't think you have any that would suit."

"Oh, yes, I have," said Mary, eagerly. "My new one!"

"But, my dear, it is so pretty, and too expensive for a poor child to wear."

"Nothing is too pretty to give to Our Lord, is it, mother? And I am only a poor child now."

Mrs. Beresford smiled.

"It would be a great sacrifice, you know. It is not a duty for you to give your lovely dress away."

"I want to make some sacrifice," said Mary, "because God may bless the future more and more, and make father well."

Mrs. Beresford said nothing for a time.

"Where do the people, Alice spoke of, live?"

"Back in the court. Their name is Doran."

Mrs. Beresford's face brightened.

"Oh, yes—a very respectable family. The father is a chronic invalid, in a hospital. The mother did some work for me when Sarah was sick. You can go over and see them. I think, though, that, if you give the young girl your frock, you had better take the silver lace from it. It would look conspicuous and out of place."

"Very well, mother. Can I go now?"

Mrs. Beresford smiled, and Mary ran off to get her hat.

III.

It only wanted a few days of the great feast when the children of the parish, in which the Dorans lived, were to make their First Communion. There was much preparation in many households. The boys were to wear new suits, if possible, with white rosettes on their breasts; and the girls to have white frocks with blue sashes.

Anna Doran had passed her examination for that happy circle that was to approach the altar.

Anna was thirteen years old and large for

her age—in fact she was quite as stout and a little taller than Mary Beresford. She had lived in the country, far from a church, and her First Communion had been postponed.

The Dorans were very poor. Dick, Anna's elder brother, lay on a lounge in their little parlor, unable to speak. He had been thrown from a wagon and internally injured. Mrs. Doran went out to people's houses and acted as laundress.

Anna was obliged to stay at home, to nurse Dick.

To-day Anna was unusually silent. She was a ruddy-cheeked girl, with dark brown hair, dark blue eyes, and a good-humored expression. Generally, she was very gay and cheerful; but to-day her fits of quietness made her brother wonder.

Anna had a deep grief in her heart. It may seem as small to you as Mary's, for in both cases, a frock was concerned. Anna's was much the greater. She had only two worn and patched dresses. They might be made to do in the street, for they were always neat and clean; but they were so old and rust-colored, from hard wear, that she could not wear either of them in church on the great day. Oh, if she only had a white frock! But it was useless to wish for such an impossible thing. Her mother could scarcely get sufficient money to pay the rent and Dick's medicine bill.

Dick would have given her a frock, if he were well and able to earn money. And her dear father could not do it. They had never let him know how poor they were. He was looking forward to see Anna come to his bedside at the hospital, in her white dress, after the function at the church. Tears came into Anna's eyes when she thought of his disappointment.

Her mother had thought of asking Mrs. Howe for an old frock of Alice's. We know how that turned out. The time was so near, and nobody would help her to the thing she most wanted—though it was a little thing! She saw many girls in the street carelessly wearing white dresses. And she said a Hail Mary to save herself from envying them. While Dick slept, after she had tenderly washed his face and hands and combed his hair, she took out her rosary and prayed that she might be allowed to make her First Communion with the others.

After all, she thought, "Our dear Lord will know best." And then the fear and anxiousness left her. She busied herself in arranging a few flowers on the table, sent to Dick by a neighboring market-woman. There was a knock.

Anna opened the door and Mary stood on the threshold, smiling a little.

"May I come in?"

"Certainly," answered Anna, recognizing her guest, for she had seen her at church, "you are Miss Beresford, are you not?"

"I am Mary Beresford." And, catching sight of the covered figure on the sofa, "is your brother sick?"

"Yes," said Anna, "he is better now; he is asleep."

"I must talk softly, then."

Anna gave her a chair, and, as she noticed how neat and tasteful her guest's dress was, she wished hers was less shabby. Then the remembrance of her own trouble which so nearly concerned a dress, came to her and she sighed.

Mary's quick ear caught the sigh.

"I must tell you why I came, I hope you will not be offended. I was told that you were to make your First Communion with the others in a few days."

"Not with the others, I'm afraid."

An eager question rose to Mary's lips; but she did not speak it. She waited for Anna to go on. But Anna paused. Mary felt the difficulty of alluding to the frock, now that she had come.

Suddenly, Dick who had been dozing and not aware that a stranger was present, spoke—

"If I were rich, Anna, do you know what

I'd do? Why, I'd just buy you a new dress, so that you could look like the other girls."

"Hush, Dick, Miss Beresford is here."

Dick looked up and smiled at Mary. He was very pale; but sickness could not take the expression of good nature entirely out of his face. His half-open eyes, his stiff red hair, and even his weak voice expressed good nature. Dick nodded towards Mary and then relapsed into a doze again.

"I came to ask you if I might give you a frock I have," said Mary, plunging into the subject in desperation, "I haven't worn it, and if you would please take it, I would be obliged——"

Anna could scarcely credit the words.

"It is a nice white frock and I think it will fit you."

Anna hid her face in her hands, and Mary saw tears trickling through her fingers.

"I am so sorry—I hope you are not offended. Indeed—indeed——"

"Offended!" cried Anna, taking away her hands and looking at Mary with tear-filled eyes, "you don't know how happy you have made me! It seemed so dreadful not to be able to go with the others. And father would be so disappointed, if I did not go in white. Oh, dear, if you will only lend me your dress, I shall be very, very happy!"

Mary's face glowed with pleasure.

"I will give it to you, if you will take it. Let me see. You are just about my size. I'll send it over this afternoon. I must go now. Good-bye!"

Mary hurried away, to escape Anna's thanks. All her forebodings were forgotten—all her desire to wear her pretty frock was gone—she almost ran home. She met Alice Howe coming out of a confectioner's shop, with a big box of chocolate *bon-bons*. Alice called to her to stop and have some, but Mary shook her head; she was eager to get home.

It did not take her long to rip off the silver lace from the white gown. She did it, singing cheerfully. She knew now how sweet it is to make others happy. It is really the most solid pleasure in this world of fading joys.

Her mother gave her some thin stuff for a veil for Anna, and some blue ribbon. In the afternoon, Mary put the precious frock in its box, and, with the veil and ribbon wrapped in tissue paper, went with Kathleen to Wilbert's Court.

Kathleen talked quite gaily to Dick and amused herself with a cat, while Anna tried on the frock and Mary critically inspected it in the kitchen. A little pinning and a few stitches made the dress just right.

Anna forgot her bashfulness in the excitement of the process, and, Mary had so many suggestions to make, that she talked very much and very fast—an unusual thing with her.

At last Anna stood arrayed in the new dress. Dick almost jumped from his sofa in delight.

"She is prettier than Alice Howe," cried Kathleen, clapping her hands.

"And much nicer, if she is poor," thought Mary.

Smiling and blushing, Anna let them admire. While they were thus employed, Mrs. Doran entered; tired and worn-out, laden with brooms, brushes and a bucket. She understood the situation at a glance.

She sat down on a chair near the door and looked at Anna. Then she looked at Mary and tried to speak.

"God bless you, my dear," she tried to say and her voice choked. She began to sob. "You don't know what a kindness you've done."

When Mrs. Doran had wiped her eyes, she asked Mary to have tea with the family. Mary said she would, partly because she feared to offend Mrs. Doran, and partly because she wanted to see how poor people live. She expected to be very poor herself, and she would like to know how the poor lived.

Anna was not long in getting tea ready. A round table was moved over near Dick's sofa, so that he could sit up and have his tea, too. A tea-pot and five cups and saucers were produced and put on the white cloth, with some bread and raspberry jam. Mary, who expected to see tin cups and perhaps wooden spoons, was agreeably surprised. Everything was as clean and as shining as at home. Kathleen laughed and chatted away, and enjoyed her tea very much.

Some paper roses on a stand struck Mary as very pretty. She admired them.

"I almost thought they were real."

Anna put them in her hand.

"Take them, please," she said, "I made them when I had to watch Dick, during the long winter nights."

Mary thanked and brought a vivid look of delight to Anna's face, by putting them in her belt. After a pleasant hour, Mary and Kathleen said good-bye.

In the evening, Mary told her father all about her visits. He was very much interested.

"And so you gave up your new dress?"

"It wasn't much loss to me, father, I didn't need it."

"Well, my dear," said her father, smiling—how that smile on his pale face cheered her in

after years! —"I have heard that Carmelite Nuns say, when they heard of a good deed, 'God reward you!' I say, with all my heart, 'God reward you,' little girl!"

Dermot and Brian were eager to know more about their new home.

"I am going to take you out to see it to-morrow," their father said. "Now let us have some singing, 'The air shall be filled with music——'"

Kathleen broke in with great pride—

"'And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And silently steal away.'"

"Shakespeare!" said Brian.

"Longfellow!" cried Kathleen, triumphantly. "You boys don't know everything!"

They laughed. Song followed song until Mrs. Beresford gave Gounod's "Ave Maria." After that they sat quiet, as the moonlight stole into the room.

They were all fond of music. There was one fear that oppressed Brian;—"Would they be too poor in the country to have their piano?" The rest were pondering over the same question. Kathleen suddenly asked it.

"No," Mr. Beresford said, "we shall take the piano with us, and Brian's fiddle, too."

Brian's spirits rose. He went to the piano and began—

"'I love to play the violin,
And hear its sound so sweet,
It gently rests beneath my chin,
My weary heart to greet.

"'I cannot play it very well:
I have not learned it long;
And when I play, as you can tell,
I get a little wrong.

"'Those stupid folks who live next door,
They hate the violin;
But I will practice more and more,
My dear old violin!'"

"Shakespeare!" cried Dermot. "Isn't it Kathleen?"

Kathleen looked puzzled.

"I found it in my scrap-book the other day—out of the *Keynote*, I think. It expresses my feelings to a T."

Mr. Beresford was very quiet; but he was happy. He looked at the little group and thanked God that poverty could not make them poorer in love for one another. They said good-night, after the rosary had been recited, and went to dream of their new, strange "home."

IV.

Dermot had his trials. While Mary was debating about the fate of her white frock, his beloved bicycle had hung in the balance. To tell the truth, Dermot was in debt. His father had always been very liberal. It was Mr. Beresford's custom to allow the boys a certain sum, every quarter, for spending money, and Dermot expected, as usual, thirty dollars on the first day of the coming month. But when Mr. Beresford made his announcement at the breakfast table, Dermot felt that he ought not to ask for it, and his heart sank. He owed Arthur Morris five dollars for his share in a lawn tennis set; he owed thirteen dollars for his rowing suit to a tailor, and ten more for a big collection of stamps to a stationer on Tenth Street. He had in his pocket-book exactly one dollar and a half. He said to himself, that he ought not to ask his father for more money, and he must depend on his allowance to pay his debts. Dermot thought and thought. What a fool he had been to spend last quarter's allowance so recklessly, and to run in debt. He would never run in debt again! But now, how was he to get out of it?

What could he sell?

His books? No; he would not part with them.

His collection of stamps? Nobody would buy them. He had tried that before.

His magic lantern? The slides were not all in good condition. He could think of nothing saleable—everything he owned was more or less dilapidated, for Dermot had never learned to be careful of things. Arthur Morris had offered him seventy-five dollars for his bicycle. But, he said to himself, that he would never part with that. It was as dear as a horse to him. He had had too many pleasant days with that pleasant companion, to let it go now. No—he would keep it. But he thought of the bills that hung over him.

"Oh, dear!" he cried, "why didn't I remember that father has always said, 'Do without things rather than go into debt. The debtor is generally a slave.' I wish I had remembered that."

Regrets were useless. The bills must be paid by the first. He had promised. He *would* not ask his father for the money, no matter what might happen. That would be too mean! He had heard his father's sigh when he had written a check for the household expenses of the month.

His mother had given him the bicycle at Christmas. He went and knocked at the door of her room; when she answered, he asked her if he might sell his bicycle.

"I won't have much chance to use it on the farm."

"You may," his mother said, "you will not be at work all the time, Dermot."

"But I owe some money, mother, and I don't want to ask father for it."

He said this with a blush.

Mrs. Beresford was silent for an instant; then she looked at him as if she had read his thoughts.

"Be honest, in spite of all, my boy," she said. "It is better to make a sacrifice than to add to your father's burdens."

Dermot turned away with a heavy heart. Somehow, he had expected that his mother would have made the thing easy for him, in some way. She had always done so. He went downstairs, feeling that he must take more responsibilities.

He would soon be a man. He went out to Arthur Morris' house and rang the bell. Yes, Arthur was at home. He had just come from school. Dermot would find him in the yard. There Dermot did find him, practising with his Indian clubs.

The bargain was soon made. Arthur was eager to have the bicycle.

"I'll come over to your house and father will send you a check for it to-night."

"Very well," Dermot said, with a pang.

A little later, Arthur rode triumphantly off towards the park on Dermot's bicycle. Dermot followed the flash and glitter of the wheel until it was lost to sight.

Dermot had no real sorrows in life, and this sacrifice cut him very deep. It lightened Mrs. Beresford's heart. "The children have not been made selfish by prosperity," she said to herself, "I can trust them to do their duty, I think."

On the morning after Dermot's bargain, the postman brought him an envelope. It contained Mr. Morris' check for seventy-five dollars. Dermot was off like a flash to pay his debts. It did not take him long, and he went back home with a much lighter heart.

Mr. Beresford kept his promise to take the family out to the new "home." It would be a very dreary prospect, indeed, that would have kept away smiles and jokes from the four Beresfords, on a bright day, with a railroad journey into the country before them. Brian carried a big hamper which he had packed with cold ham and chicken. He declared that he always became fe-

rociously hungry when traveling, and that father could not afford to buy luncheon at every stop.

Mr. Beresford, looking weak and care-worn, smiled at this.

"I am glad you accept the situation, Brian," he said, "I am afraid the railroad fares will use up all that I ought to spend to-day."

It seemed queer to the children to know that their father was quite in earnest in this. He had never considered money before.

They were a half-hour early for the train, and while they waited, Dermot went up to the ticket office and returned with six "return" tickets.

"It's my treat to-day, father," he said, with the air of a millionaire.

His father smiled, but seemed pre-occupied. Brian at once asserted that Dermot had robbed a bank.

The journey was very pleasant. For some distance they drew in the track of the silver Schuylkill, sheltered by its banks of soft green. Then into delightfully rich and undulating land, past well-kept farms and blossoming orchards.

At last they were told by their father that the next stop would be Sherwood Station. The announcement was a great relief. The station consisted of a room with four doors. A bench was nailed to the wall. In the centre stood a

large stove. A narrow path led from the station into a thick growth of wood. A wooden cart with chairs in it, waited at the station. Two horses were harnessed to it; a man stood at their heads, stolidly chewing tobacco and now and then cracking his whip.

Mr. Beresford spoke to him—

"Are you Mr. Thorne's hired-man?"

"I'm Sam," answered the man, taking a shrewd look at Mr. Beresford. "I guess you're the stranger that thinks of settling on old Judge Binn's place?"

"Yes."

Sam pushed back his wide-brimmed straw hat and smiled at the party.

"Welcome all—heartily welcome. I guess we'd better help the women folks into the wagon. City people aren't much ' ds at climbing."

The members of the fami having perched, more or less, comfortably on the c irs, they were begged by Sam to "sit solid" and to hold on tight when they should come to ruts in the road. He went on to explain that Mr. Thorne's "Germantown" had broken down the night before, and that he had to rig up the only vehicle he could, as there wasn't time to borrow a carriage from any of the neighbors.

It was a very funny ride. It was not easy to

"sit solid" on wooden chairs, when the springless cart jilted over large ruts, made by the spring floods of rain and bad road-workers. The children enjoyed it, however.

Mr. Thorne's place consisted of a square farmhouse, and about fifty acres of flat, rich land. There were no trees about his farm and the young people condemned it on that account, at once. They did not notice, as their father did, the well-kept, five-barred fences and the neat, over-running barns and trim hay-stacks.

Mr. Thorne, a jolly hospitable farmer, dressed in his "store clothes," came out to welcome the visitors.

"Come right in" he said, in a hearty voice. "Good-morning Miss Beresford, good-morning youngsters—Maria" he called, "they're here!"

Maria, a stout, kindly-looking woman, came in, kissed the girls, shook hands with Mrs. Beresford, and insisted upon taking their bonnets and wraps.

"Dinner is just on the table. Come in."

Dermot, Brian, and Kathleen were delighted by this want of ceremony. Dinner was the word they were waiting for. They followed Mrs. Thorne into a large kitchen, hung with bright tins, and scrubbed to almost snowy whiteness.

At the long table, laden with meat, vegeta-

bles and pies, several men in their "shirt sleeves" were seated.

"I don't make company of you, you see," said Mrs. Thorne, "and I hope you'll excuse our hired-men for beginning to eat before you came. They're hungry, poor fellows!"

The men grinned.

Mr. Beresford was put on the right side of his host, with a big pitcher of milk at his elbow. His wife was opposite. The children were sandwiched between the hired-men.

The Beresfords, according to custom, made the sign of the cross before they sat down.

Mrs. Thorne watched them in astonishment, and whispered to her husband as she passed his chair—

"They look nice; but what's that sign. Are they Masons, Ike?"

Ike laughed.

"No, they're Catholics."

Mrs. Thorne made a gesture of horror over the roast mutton.

"We'll have the Pope here next."

The husband laughed again.

"I admire their grit," he whispered, "they're not ashamed of their religion."

Mrs. Thorne was only half satisfied. She had been brought up in a part of the country

where a Catholic, with the exception of an occasional farm-laborer, was unknown. She had a horror of Catholics, for her mind had been filled with all kinds of stories concerning them, from her earliest childhood.

Still, as she looked at Mr. Beresford's good face, and the frank, gentle look of the rest, she said to herself, that all "Romanists" could not be as bad as those she had read about. She offered them all the hospitality in her power, and Kathleen's plate was over-crowded with all the delicacies of the farm.

After dinner, Mr. Thorne volunteered to show them the place which Mr. Beresford had just bought. It lay about a quarter of a mile down the road, in a direct line from Mr. Thorne's. Mrs. Thorne put on her sun-bonnet and trotted along by Mrs. Beresford's side. She was full of gossip about the farm-work.

Mrs. Beresford asked her if there were nice neighbors.

"Well enough," Mrs. Thorne replied, "but they will not have much to do with you because you're Romanists; but I don't hold that way. Pious is as pious does, I say."

Mrs. Beresford smiled.

Mary's face reddened with indignation.

"I don't think we shall have much to do

with them," she said. "They must be very ignorant people."

"It's hard to do without neighbors in the country," said Mrs. Thorne. "You see," she added, catching a warning glance from her husband, "we're mostly Methodists or Baptists around here. All the Romanists and the Dutch are on the other side of the hill, so we kind of hold together. Some of us are awful set in our way of thinking."

Mr. Thorne edged around to his wife and whispered—

"Don't you go disgusting these folks with the neighbors. He has only half made the bargain and the Judge will be mad, if he backs out."

"I *do* wish they weren't Romanists," returned his wife, in another whisper which Mary could not help hearing. "I think they'd be real nice folks."

"Never you mind their religion. There are just as good Catholics as other people."

Mrs. Thorne sighed.

By this time the party had reached a square, stone house, "pointed" with white splashes of cement. It stood back some distance from the road. There was a lawn in front of it, divided from the road by a low rail fence. The lawn was decorated by several rose-bushes, a clump of lilacs,

and four spreading oak trees. The shutters of the house badly wanted painting. Back of the house, between it and a tall barn, stretched rows of peach, plum, pear, and apple trees. The air seemed full of exquisite blossoms. Showers of pink and white fell in all directions, as a fresh wind began to blow.

Mary was astonished by the beauty of the scene. Mrs. Beresford watched the pleasure of the others. Kathleen, whose lungs were weak, drew a long breath of the delicious air. Mr. Beresford straightened up and seemed to feel invigorated.

They walked up the path into the house. A hall-way, in which stood a high clock nailed with brass to the wall, led between four rooms—two on each side—to the back. The children ran through the hall and found themselves in the orchard. Here they had a game of hide and seek, at once. The elders went through the house. The rooms were small, but there were plenty of closets. Mrs. Beresford was very glad. She said that never in her life had she had enough closets.

Some repairs were badly needed; but on the whole, the old house, built before the Revolution, was in fairly good condition. The vegetable garden, an unusually wide space of ground on the right of the orchard, was next examined. The late occupant had kept it in good condition dur-

ing the winter, and Mr. Beresford would only have to continue his work.

The house stood on a hill. A narrow river touched the boundary of Mr. Beresford's ninety acres. From the doorstep one could see even the spires of the distant town.

"How lovely!" Mrs. Beresford exclaimed. "It will be a great privilege to live in this exhilirating air, and look on this scene every day of our lives."

Dermot thought that even a lovely scene in the country might become tiresome.

"It will be always the same," he said, with a sigh.

Brian laughed.

"Why Dermot, how can you say that? The scene has changed since we came here. See, the river is darker and the hills less blue. The mist has lifted. I could stay here always!"

"Don't be too rash, my boy," said Mr. Beresford. "We must all try to be cheerful and contented. It is our duty. One gloomy or discontented one among us will spoil everything. A pleasant home-life makes outside work all the easier."

Dermot sighed. Duty, he said to himself, is a very hard thing.

The farm contained some large patches of

woodland. This delighted the children. To own their own woods seemed to them an exquisite thing! To city children there is a wonderful mystery about woods. They have been nurtured on stories about woods. Were not the men who so opportunely came to Red Riding-hood's rescue, wood-choppers? Was not the Sleeping Beauty surprised in a wood? To the Beresford children the wood was a great treasure.

Kathleen was afraid that a bear or a wolf would come out and gobble her up. The rest laughed at this, and Brian the loudest of all. Kathleen, however, had her revenge when he tripped over the end of a creeping vine, and made Mr. Thorne laugh by declaring, quite seriously, that it was a rattle-snake.

Mr. and Mrs. Beresford saw that there was much work before them. Mrs. Beresford was almost reconciled to the prospect by the sight of the faint color, which the country breeze had brought into her husband's cheeks.

Altogether it was a very eventful day.

They returned to the city shortly after nightfall. They were too tired to have music before they went to bed. They all admitted that, since they were to be poor, it was better to be poor in the country.

Shortly after this visit, Mr. Beresford's affairs

were wound up. He had sold his house furnished as it was. When all his debts were paid he had enough money to stock his farm; and he was anxious to get away from the city before the new owner of his house should take posession.

The plainest and simplest part of the furniture was retained. Mr. Beresford concluded to keep the piano, much to the delight of everybody.

The day of the moving came. It was a day of the hardest kind of work. At last, however, everything was stored away in the freight car, and, by nine o'clock that night, the belongings of the Beresfords were scattered over the floors of their new home.

Mr. Thorne and other neighbors came to offer help. They promised to return the next day. And they did. In a short time, beds were set up, carpets put down, and the house only needed the skillful touches which women know how to give to rooms, to be quite home-like.

Happily, Mary had been obliged by her mother to help in the kitchen and dining-room, during some hours of each day. She was of great use to her mother in preparing dinner for the helpers. Mrs. Thorne thoughtfully sent over a strong servant who did a great deal of work.

Never had the children been so tired as they were on the night of their first day in the coun-

try. Lawn tennis and bicycle-riding were trifles compared with "moving," and the "getting of things to rights."

The crucifix and some religious pictures, excited comment among the helpers; but Mr. and Mrs. Beresford were so gentle and considerate, that nothing but half-murmered words of disapproval followed.

Mrs. Beresford warned the children that they were not to lose their temper, in case anything rude should be said about religion.

"Our best weapon must be gentleness and good example. Good example makes more converts than argument."

Dermot did not feel willing to accept this. He had heard one of the farmers say something about "idolatry and worshipping painted figgers." He said to himself that he would make that fellow take back his words, if he ever had a chance.

Mr. Beresford knew little of farm-work. He had selected this farm because the roads were, as he thought, good Given good roads, a fair soil, and a situation not too far from town, he thought he could, in time, bring profit from these qualities.

It was now May. The season was backward.

Potatoes had been planted before Mr. Beres-

ford came. A hired-man, who had taken care of the farm since February, had put in corn in April, under Mr. Beresford's orders, and plenty of beans; tomatoes had been started under cover. By the middle of May the spring work was done, and the hired-men left. After this, work began in earnest for the boys.

Mr. Beresford's intention was to use only part of his farm, until he and his young helpers had gained experience. With plenty of vegetables, enough fodder for the horse and cow, a good supply of pork, and an occasional visit from the butcher, Mr. Beresford thought that they could get through the winter with little expense, and be ready to begin farming operations on a larger scale in the spring.

The hired-man had taken good care of the raspberry plants. The time for picking the berries arrived. Mr. Beresford found that they had more than they could possibly use. Mr. Thorne offered to get a commission merchant, in Rossville, to sell them for him, and the Beresfords were overjoyed, when, after many days of tiresome picking and equally tiresome packing, the raspberries which had gone away in little wooden boxes, came back in the shape of money. It was for the boys, the first money they had ever earned.

Dermot said that they ought to use it in get-

ting a hired-man. His father would not hear of it.

"We must save every cent we can."

There were no luxuries, except plenty of cream. The young people missed the confectioners' shops, and the various other city temptations to the spending of money.

Brian soon learned to milk the cow. Mary suggested that it was her business to do that, but her father declared that she would have enough to do in the house. And she had. Hard work made the "men folks," as Mrs. Thorne called them, hungry. It tasked Mary's ingenuity to provide three meals a day for the "cormorants," as she called them.

Mrs. Beresford's love of comfort soon changed the interior of the farm-house, and it began to seem something like their own home. There was little time for music or for study. Everybody had to get up so early and work so hard, that sleep was very welcome.

The Beresfords watched their neighbor's way of doing things, and Mr. Thorne was always ready with advice. The summer passed uneventfully. In September, after four months of the hardest work they had ever done, the hay and oats were safe in the barn, and the back-bone of the year's labor broken.

They had sold a good number of baskets of ox-heart cherries, the apples looked well, but the pears were, evidently, going to fail.

Kathleen's hens had not done much, but they were promising. She was very careful of them. Her father had promised her all the money she could make out of them.

About this time, the family began to consider its loss and gain. Mr. Beresford was better; the young people were all strong and brown; Brian's chest, which showed a tendency to be hollow, had swelled out, and Mrs. Beresford's delight in the wonderfully beautiful changes of nature, pleased the rest.

Dermot was discontented. The work had been hard, sometimes, in the hot weather, he had thought it was more than he could stand; but he did not mind that so much. There was no career for him. He dreamed of going to college and coming out ready to enter a profession. That was all over now. He supposed he would be a farmer for the rest of his days.

Dermot had never been very studious. But, now that his opportunities had slipped from him, he began to value study and to realize its use.

The Fall passed, until November came. Everybody, except Dermot, was charmed by the gorgeous changes that took place in the woods.

Yellow, from the palest cream to the deepest orange, was intermingled with the lightest pink and the deepest crimson. Beech, and maple, and oak, contributed their various shades of color to the magnificent bouquet which October presented to the year.

This was a pleasant time for the Beresfords. Now they could rest. There was a large stock of vegetables laid in—enough to support the family during the winter. The barn was sufficiently well filled with hay and oats. Mr. Beresford breathed freely. He had made three hundred dollars from the sale of surplus vegetables and berries; they were all stronger and healthier. His wife felt so well that she objected, strongly, to his having a woman to come over and do the washing; but he would not hear of that.

Mrs. Beresford sometimes sighed as she thought of the ruined prospects of the boys. Work on a farm does not leave much time for sighing, and her sighs became more and more infrequent.

One October day, at the breakfast table—which was quite as pleasant, but with less rich appointments than formerly—Mr. Beresford said—

"We must begin some regular studies and outline a plan of head-work for the winter, when we will not have much to do, except the chores."

Mary looked ruddy and cheerful, seated behind a large bunch of marigolds and dahlias.

"You have given me a marigold for my button-hole, this morning," her father said, interrupting himself to smile at her. It's Our Lady's flower, you know. *L'or de Marie*, I have heard a French-woman call it—Mary's gold. As I was saying, we'll have to get down the Latin books, boys, brush the dust off them and get to work."

"Much good it will do us," muttered Dermot.

"My dear boy," said Mr. Beresford, very gently, "nothing that one studies is ever lost. It always pays to study."

Dermot sighed.

"I don't see what good Latin will do us farmers—here in the wilderness."

"Nevertheless, Dermot," answered his father, you will study."

"I suppose I must," Dermot said, "but I think nothing is of any use here, except to know about manures and that sort of thing."

"Oh, father!" broke in Brian, "let us have a picnic to-day and begin studies to-morrow."

Mr. Beresford readily agreed. It did not take long to get rid of the morning's work. Willing hands make easy work, the proverb says.

By half-past eight o'clock, Dermot had his gun ready; Brian, his fishing rod; Mrs. Beres-

ford, a book she wanted to read; Kathleen an album for drying leaves, and Mary, a book on botany. Between them, Dermot and Brian carried a basket of luncheon.

There was a slight autumn mist in the air, made more misty by the blue smoke from the burning brush-wood in the various places around them. It was an exquisite day.

"They may talk of Italy," said Mr. Beresford, "but you children can honestly say that there never was a more perfect sky, or purer air in Naples. I have been there."

"Three cheers for America!" cried Brian. "Hooray! hooray!"

The spot chosen for the day's rest was at the top of a wood-crowned hill, which, to-day, was more beautiful in its vari-colored vesture, than Solomon in all his glory.

Mr. Beresford told the boys to put up the hammocks for their mother and Mary. Mrs. Beresford settled comfortably to her book, and Mary opened a letter which Brian had brought from the post-office. Dermot set to work to clean his gun, and Brian went off to the river accompanied by Kathleen.

"Oh mother!" cried Mary, all aglow with pleasure. "Guess who has written to me?"

"Alice Howe?"

"Oh, dear, no." Mary was sore because Alice had not written to her. "It's from Anna Doran. I'll read it." And Mary began—

"DEAR MISS BERESFORD,

"I have just found out your address from Mrs. Howe, whom my mother asked for it. My mother has gone to New York, for six months, to nurse a lady who is sick there.

"I never had a chance to tell you how pleased father was to see me in your white frock. It was the happiest day of my life, when he blessed me and thanked God for letting him live, to see his little Anna make her First Communion. I have put the frock away in a box; I have been very careful of it; and I will give it back to you with my best thanks.

"I want to ask you a question. It seems to me that housework must come hard on you and your mother. Now, will you let me come and do it for you?

"I don't like to leave Dick; he is better now and can work a few days a week; but he does not gain strength. I hope that when I have been with you (if you will take me,) I may find a place for Dick near you; I am sure he would improve in the country air. I do not want wages, only a frock and shoes once in a while, and a chance to read in the evenings. You see, I do not write very well, and, if you would set a copy, sometimes, I would be grateful. Do, please, Miss Beresford, ask your

mother to let me come. I can cook and do all kinds of housework. God bless you!

"Yours, very truly,

"ANNA M. DORAN."

The spelling was very fair, and the writing, although a little shaky in some letters, was not so bad.

"Well?" said Mrs. Beresford. "What do you want me to do?"

Mary looked up at her mother and asked, in her turn—

"What shall I ask you to do?"

Father and mother both laughed.

"We'll think it over until luncheon time, and put it to the vote."

Lunch time did not come enough to suit the boys, who were always hungry. Under a wide-spreading oak, Mary and Kathleen laid the cloth on smooth, soft grass. The solids provided soon disappeared; copious draughts of cool spring water, which Mr. Beresford said was more delicious than champagne, followed the solids, and then Mary drew from a smaller basket, an immense apple pie and a large bottle of cream. This unexpected dessert was greeted with acclamations.

When Brian had finished the last morsel of pie, Mary proposed to read Anna's letter.

"Now," said Mr. Beresford, stretching himself on the grass and looking up at the blue sky, "I shall leave the decision to you children, with your mother's permission. I know that Anna Doran is a strong, good-natured young girl. She can be of use to us. And, if she were alone, there could be no question as to the advantage for us. But, I do not want to separate her from her brother. Shall we take an invalid here?"

The boys looked at each other. They had work enough, without having a sick man on their hands.

"I quite agree with your mother" said Mr. Beresford. "Anna will lighten the work of your mother and sisters, boys. On the other hand, an invalid, to be waited on and amused, may increase yours."

"But it would be such a kind act," said Mary. "And Dick may get so much better in the country, that he may be a help instead of a burden."

"Sick men are always nuisances," murmured Brian. "Poor people can't afford to be kind. We're too poor to be kind."

"Poor people need not be selfish," said Mary.

"What do you say Dermot?"

Dermot's face was rather gloomy. He did not like strange faces, and for all he knew, the

Dorans might eat with their knives and have very bad manners. They might interfere with him in some way. It was all very well for Mary to have somebody to help her, but it would be very uncomfortable to have strange people in the house.

Kathleen was pleased. She had taken a fancy to Anna Doran.

"Well?" said Mrs. Beresford.

Mary saw that the boys were against her, and she also saw that Brian's eyes were fixed with regret on the remains of the apple pie. With a demure smile, she opened her basket again and drew out a half-dozen peach dumplings, baked to a delightfully brown tint.

"Oh my!" cried Brian, involuntarily.

The gloom on the brow of the fastidious Dermot gave place to a grin of expectation.

"Very good, Mary," he said, "did you bring any sauce?"

Mary had given special attention to the preparation of the sauce.

"Well boys? What do you say?"

"Oh, I say let 'em come!" exclaimed Brian.

Dermot was silent.

"It may save Dick's life," said Mary, "and Anna will help us so much about the house. She has never had a really cheerful home.

Dermot did not want to give in. He asked

himself whether he was selfish or not, and he was honest enough to conclude that he was.

"I don't like the idea," he said, "but if it's going to help the fellow along, I'm not going to object."

"All in favor of the proposition,"—began Brian,

"What proposition?" demanded Mrs. Beresford, smiling. "I am chairman here, young man. All in favor of having Dick and Anna Doran here for a visit, please say 'Aye'"

"Aye!" they all exclaimed.

"All of a contrary opinion, say 'No'!"

Nobody answered.

"The 'Ayes' have it! Mary may write to ask them to come."

"Oh, thank you!" said Mary. "I am sure we shall never regret it."

A little while after this Dermot shot two rabbits, and Brian "hooked" a fair number of fish. The spoil was brought back to their father and mother in triumph.

Dermot and Brian found a clump of chestnut trees separated from the rest of the wood by a deep ravine. They had brought with them a base-ball bat. Dermot used it for clubbing down the chestnuts, much to Kathleen's delight; the ground under the trees was soon strewn with

chestnuts enclosed in their burrs. Once, when Dermot had thrown the bat higher than usual, it fell on the other side of the ravine. Dermot was about to cross over for it when he saw a boy come out of a clump of oaks on the other side. He called to him.

"What do you want?" demanded the boy. He was a lank, yellow-skinned boy, named Job Fitts. He lived about a mile from the Beresfords.

"Will you please throw over my bat?"

Job looked around, saw, and grasped the bat.

"Findin's keepin's!" he yelled, with a grin. "Us boys on this side always keep what we find!"

"You shall not keep my bat," cried Dermot.

Job grinned defiantly.

"Pop says you're only Papists, and ignorant idolators!"

"Let's go for him!" cried Brian.

Dermot was rushing across the ravine to recover his bat, when Job, who had been grinning and waving it with a triumphant air, made a leap into the air, suggestive of great and gleeful happiness. He certainly had the advantage. He was in possession of the bat, and Dermot and Brian would find it hard work to reach him, for

the ravine was filled with creeping vines and prickly blackberry bushes.

Job Fitts felt that he was safe enough. He knew the capabilities of that ravine for tripping unwary feet better than the other boys did. He also knew that there was a narrow but muddy stream at the bottom, hidden by luxuriant weeds. He grinned, yelled, and danced in a warlike manner, swinging the bat.

"Let *me* catch him, that's all!" cried Brian, "I'll teach him to steal our bat."

Just as our boys had made a descent partly into the ravine, Job, carried away by his feelings, climbed on a rock and stood on one leg. Not satisfied with this, he mounted higher, the better to show his indifference to the approaching enemy.

He miscalculated his skill in climbing, however, and making a mis-step, he fell a distance of at least twenty feet. Down he went like a shot into a mass of tangled vines. The Beresfords heard the changed tone in the yell of their tormentor and paused.

"Where is he?" asked Brian, bewildered.

"Didn't you see him fall?"

"He must be dead."

Instead of rushing madly through the ravine as they had intended to do at first, Dermot and

Brian made for some stepping-stones they saw among the rank vegetation.

When they reached the other side, they found Job lying on the ground, moaning as if all the bones in his body were broken.

"You let me go!" he cried, viciously. "It's just like you fellows, to kick a man when he's down. I didn't want your old bat, I was only fooling."

Just at this utterance, a burly man, in shirt sleeves and straw hat, rushed from the woods and seized Job by the shoulders.

"I'll teach you," cried the new-comer, "I'll teach you to let down the bars of my fence, so that your cows can get into my corn, and to steal my fodder, you young scamp!"

Job yelled with pain. The man shook him until Job's howls filled the wood, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets.

Dermot noticed a cut on the side of his head.

"Look here," he said, "that boy has hurt himself and you've shaken him quite enough, you might kill him."

"And is it any of your business, if I did?" asked the farmer. "I'd shake the life out of you for half a cent."

"Try it!" said Dermot, facing him. The farmer was three times Dermot's size, but he was

not afraid. "This boy has hurt himself, and you've no right to whip him now."

"Haven't I? He's a young thief."

"We know that," put in Brian. "But you shall not shake him again." Brian, who had recovered the bat, brought it down heavily within an inch of the farmer's toe.

"You're the young Romanists up on the hill, I suppose," said the farmer. "Well, we're going to make this neighborhood too hot for you, as sure as my name's Jim Windsor."

"Are you?" returned Dermot. "Two can play at that game. Now——"

"Oh, my back—my back!" cried Job. "I can't get up. Go away all of you."

"Go away? you young thief, is that the way you speak to me?" And Jim Windsor, white with rage, raised his fist, as if he would bring it down on the prostrate boy's head.

Brian intercepted the blow with the bat. Jim Windsor's arm felt the metal of the boys, as he looked at their fine faces. Job, moaning with pain, looked anxiously at the three.

"You had better get away," said Dermot, contemptuously. "You are worse than a thief, to sneer at our religion, and to hurt a boy that cannot defend himself. You had better get away."

Jim Windsor shook his fist at the boys and

went off, muttering that "he'd knock the pluck out of the pesky Romanists."

"And now what are you fellows going to do with me?" asked Job, sullenly. "I expect my legs and arms are broken. Mangle me at once and get it over."

"Do?" cried Dermot, in amazement. "Do? You must think we're Pagans!"

"Of course," said Job. "Pop says so. Pop says you're idolators!"

Brian laughed.

Dermot looked angry.

"We're going to take you home, of course. "You can't walk, can you?"

"Are you fooling me?"

"No—not at all. Where do you live?"

"Down in the Hollow."

"Try to stand up!"

"Oh, I can't."

Job fell down against the rock, ghastly pale.

Dermot hastily bound his handkerchief around the cut on his head.

"He can never walk to the Hollow. Hadn't we better take him home, Brian?"

"All right," said Brian.

Their house was in sight, and they knew a short-cut. In a second, they had lifted Job between them. As gently as possible they carried

him towards their home. Job groaned and moaned piteously; and, when at last they reached the house—of which Dermot had a key—he had fainted. They laid him on the settee, in the kitchen, and then Dermot took the dipper and deluged him with water, from the pail that always stood on the window sill. After which, Job opened his eyes. At first he looked frightened. Then the sullen expression came back to his face.

Dermot had examined the cut on his head. He saw that it was not dangerous. Court-plaster would do for that; he took from his pocket a little packet he carried. He washed the blood and dust from Job's face, and then applied the plaster.

Job seemed astonished, but kept as quiet as he could, only uttering a groan now and then. When Brian ran upstairs and came down again with a pillow, which he put under Job's head, he exclaimed—

"Well, I'm dog-goned!"

Brian laughed; for this expressed the utmost amazement Job was capable of.

Dermot ran off to tell his father. The rest of the family soon appeared. Mrs. Beresford was all sympathy. Mr. Beresford looked at Job very carefully, and turned him over several times.

"Plenty of bruises," he said "but no serious damage. The boy is as much frightened as hurt. His pulse is very high and he seems feverish, you boys had better carry him into the sitting-room. Mother will make a bed in there on the lounge for him. Brian, you run over to the Hollow and tell his people."

"Don't," murmured Job, faintly, "there's nobody but Pop, and he is off on a spree. I'll go myself, if you let me. I know you do not want me here."

"Make your mind easy, my boy," said Mr. Beresford, kindly. "You are sick and you need help, and these are good reasons why we should want you here.

Job looked up at him in a puzzled way. After he had been removed to the lounge, he sank among the pillows with a sigh of relief.

Mary brought some lemonade to him. He drank it eagerly. He looked around curiously. He examined the little altar of the Blessed Virgin, in the corner, carefully decked with marigolds, dahlias, and chrysanthemums. He turned his eyes towards the piano and asked Mary if she could play music.

"A little," said Mary.

"I guess you wouldn't play for me, would you?"

"I am afraid it might make you worse."

"I guess not."

Mary softly played "Monastery Bells." When she turned around, Job was asleep.

At tea, Dermot and Brian related their adventure.

"So far," Mr. Beresford said, "we have not been obliged to come in contact with the people around us. Mr. Thorne has stood between us and them. I have seen many signs of prejudice against us."

"Vulgar wretches!" said Dermot.

"No—don't get angry, my boy. These people have lived in this quiet little place for a long time, with little communication with the outside world. They have been brought up from their infancy in the opinion that Catholics are ignorant, superstitious, blood-thirsty creatures. It is our business to teach them that Catholics are Christians in the highest sense: so do not let us get angry with them. They are ignorant—that is all."

"It's a great deal too much. It makes 'em brutal like that Jim Windsor," said Dermot. "Poor Job!"

"Poor Job, indeed!" cried Brian, "when he gets better he will probably try to steal my bat again!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Beresford, "we shall have to teach him better things while he is here by the force of example. I am very much afraid that we shall have a hard road to travel here. But I am not afraid that you boys will forget what you owe to yourselves and to these people. We must make them our friends, since we shall have to come in contact with them. We have made a good beginning with Job."

"Have we?" said Dermot. "I hope we have, father, but I don't believe that these ignorant people have any gratitude in them. Why should they hate Catholics?"

"Because they do not know them."

"They shall know the size of my fists!" cried Dermot, warmly. "I'm going to knock down the first one that insults my religion!"

"Dermot believes in knock-down arguments," whispered Brian to Mary.

Mr. Beresfod looked at Dermot reproachfully.

"There are times," he said, "when a boy may use his fists and when he ought to use them. War is a necessity at times. But we want to teach these people that we are Christians. They think we are Pagans."

"I don't care what they think!"

"Dermot!"

Dermot colored under his father's glance.

"But I say, father," broke in Brian, "we didn't come out here as missionaries; we came to work a farm. Mary is going to make a hospital of the place and now you, father, want us to teach our neighbors all sorts of things."

"My dear boy," Mr. Beresford answered, gravely, "you can get along better with the love and respect of your neighbor than without it, can't you?"

"A fellow whose getting along depends wholly on his neighbors must be poor stick."

"Granted. Nevertheless, the best of men must at times look to his neighbors for help. Much of the good of life escapes, if we live for ourselves alone. The Highest Authority teaches us to love our neighbor as ourself."

"But, father, that does not mean that we are to let those ignorant people walk over us!" cried Dermot.

"God made us for something besides worldly gain. Why did he make us, Kathleen? you told us once before, I think."

Kathleen, delighted at having been drawn into the conversation answered quietly—

"'God made me that I might know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world, and be happy with Him, forever, in the next.'"

"Thank you, Kathleen. Remember that,

Dermot. It can be applied to every incident in life. Now let's have some music."

The family went into the sitting-room. Job was lying wide-awake in the soft light of the moon. Mary lit a lamp and asked him, if music would hurt his head.

"No ma'am," he answered, shyly, and with no appearance of sullenness.

Arthur Morris had sent down some music for violin and piano, arranged from various new operas. Mary and Brian played a march. Mrs. Beresford and Dermot sang, "Back to our Mountains," from "Trovatore."

Job raised himself on his elbow and listened attentively.

"Gosh!" he said, forgetting his shyness, "that's something like music. I wouldn't mind going to Heaven, if they have music like that there. But I don't want any Sabbath-school singing in mine, thank you!"

Kathleen laughed. The others tried not to smile. Job relapsed into silence, until the candles were lit before the Blessed Virgin's altar, and the family knelt to say the rosary.

Job opened his mouth in amazement.

"I don't like this praying to idols," he said at last, "and I won't stand it. You've got to stop it!"

Brian, Kathleen, and Dermot, who found it always hard to keep from distraction at prayers, laughed outright. Mr. Beresford paused a moment, and then went on as if nothing had happened.

After they had finished the rosary, Mr. Beresford sat down beside Job, and asked him if he remembered his mother.

"Oh, yes," Job said. "I wouldn't be the boy I am, if she had lived. I'd be as well kept and as slick as any of your boys. She was an angel. Pop's spreeing just broke her heart."

"What would you do, if you had a picture of her?"

"What would I do? I'd just love to have a picture of her. But I haven't got one, so there's no use talking about it."

"You would take good care of it, wouldn't you?"

"That's a foolish question. Of course I would, and put it in a gilt frame, and be glad to do it."

"Well," said Mr. Beresford, "that's just what we're doing. That statue there is the representation of the Blessed Mother of Our Lord. She is His Mother and our Mother. We honor Him in honoring her."

"Do you mean to tell me your not worshipping a graven image?"

"Do you mean to say that the paying of respect to the Blessed Mother of God as represented by a statue, is idolatry? Do you mean to say that it would be idolatry for you to revere your mother's picture; or to say your prayers before the picture of one in Heaven,and to ask for prayers?"

"You've got me there!" he said. He turned his face to the wall and was silent. Then he went to sleep.

Job was quiet and as respectful as he could be, during the three days he stayed in the Beresfords' house.

Kathleen had lessons from her mother and Mary in the sitting-room, every morning. Job listened in wonder. He was particularly interested in the Catechism lessons. Catechism was Kathleen's strong point. And she was very glad to show off her accomplishments for Job's benefit.

There were two questions in the first chapter which Kathleen, through some strange bent in her mind, always mixed up; so she had Job "hear" her these questions in season and out of season.

"'Why must we take more care of our souls than of our bodies?'" he would suddenly ask, to Mr. Beresford's astonishment.

Kathleen would begin—

"To save our souls we must——"

"No, no! That's not it!"

"'We must take more care——'" began Job.

"Oh, yes," Kathleen would retort, recovergni the last thread, "we must take more care of our souls than of our bodies, because, 'what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' There!"

"No, 'St. Matt.——'"

"Oh, yes, 'St. Matthew, xvi. 26.'"

That's all very well," Job said once. "But, for all that, you pray to images. I've heard our minister say so."

"Ask me this question," said Kathleen, gravely. It's on page sixty: 'May we, then, pray to relics and images?'"

"All right," said Job, reading the question

"'We are not to pray to relics or images, for they have no life or sense to hear or help us.'. There!"

Job only grunted.

Nobody came to see him while he was ill, except the Baptist minister, who was polite, but reserved to the Beresfords, and who sang a hymn with Job.

The day after this visit, Job said he would leave. He said good-bye, in a bashful way, and

went out without a word of thanks. But he came back after a while, and, putting his head through the kitchen door-way, cried out—

"I'll knock anybody down that says you ain't good people, Miss Beresford."

Then he shot away like an arrow.

The family laughed very much over what they called "Job's conversion."

Dermot was still indignant against the neighborhood. He had met Jim Windsor on the road, and Jim had yelled from the top of a load of hay at him, in an insulting way.

"I'll teach this ignorant rabble better manners," he cried.

"My dear Dermot," his father said, "don't get angry. Let us make friends of these people, by kindness and a little patience. They are all Americans, and, therefore, not entirely unreasonable. Good example on our part will do more for us and for them, than fisticuffs or long arguments. American prejudice against the Church and against 'Romanists' is more quickly dissipated, the more closely we follow the teachings of the Church."

"I'd like to take a horsewhip to 'em," Dermot said.

His father made no answer. He felt sure that Dermot would gradually get right.

The Dorans came—Dick, good-natured and pleased, but not quite strong yet; Anna willing to help in every way, and quite able to do so.

Dermot was not pleased at their coming. He was polite to both of them; but he felt that, in addition to the privations of poverty and the loss of his prospects, the dislike of his neighbors and daily toil, it was another affliction to have strangers constantly with them.

Dick gradually recovered his strength in the pure air. He took to farm work, and in a few months he could do twice as much as Dermot, and quite as much as Brian.

On one sad day, Mr. Beresford did not get up to breakfast. He was never well again. In spite of country air and constant exercise, consumption held him in bondage. The hectic flush in his cheeks was like that glow which lights up the maples, just before they are crumpled and browned by the wintry blasts.

Now Anna Doran's skill as a nurse came into use. Dick, too, was very kind. He made Dermot stay upstairs and read to his father, while he undertook to do Dermot's usual work.

Dermot spent much time in his father's room. Mr. Beresford showed the greatest anxiety to improve Dermot's education; and, during those hours of the morning, when Mr. Beresford could

exert himself at all, he studied hard under his father's direction.

Mrs. Beresford was very glad of this. If Dermot could only get a good education, he might yet become a priest. This was the hope of her life. Mrs. Beresford learned to thank God for the inspiration that had induced her to take the Dorans into the family. In this time of trouble, their kindness was most acceptable.

Dick had lessons every morning from Dermot; and Anna from Mary, under Mrs. Beresford's direction.

They all thought that Mr. Beresford would never get up from his bed, although the doctor said that he might linger for, perhaps, a year.

Still, the winter was a very cheerful one. Mr. Beresford was very sweet and gentle. In the winter evenings, the children, including Dick and Anna, gathered around a big round table in his room and spent an hour in study.

After that there was pleasant and often instructive conversation.

The wood fire in the grate burned brightly, and sent out a fitful glow on the faces around it.

Kathleen and Anna were cracking nuts in a corner. Dermot was puzzling over a passage in Cæsar. Brian was trying to make a basket of fir cones. Mrs. Beresford had been reading aloud,

from "Fabiola," but had laid the book down on her lap. Mary was darning stockings—against the household rule, that the evening should be devoted entirely to recreation and study. Dick was making a fire-screen for Mrs. Beresford. This piece of art was approaching completion. It was much admired. Dick had found a broken clothes-horse in the cellar. Having carefully mended it, he covered it with thick brown paper, and afterward with black glazed paper. On this he had pasted very carefully all the bright pictures he could get. The children ransacked all their stories of Christmas numbers of the London *Graphic*, etc., for pictures. The centre was a large colored picture of the Madonna of San Sisto, which Mary had cut from *The Illustrated Catholic American*, and tinted it from her own water-color box. It is supposed that Mrs. Beresford was unaware of the destination of this work of art; but, considering that whispered consultations were going on near her all the time, she must have known all about it. However, she pretended not to notice it. Dick was in the act of pasting on it a wreath of yellow pansies.

"It's not so bad to be poor, after all," said Dermot, lazily biting a russet apple. "In spite of hard work, I've never had a better time in my life."

"Poor!" exclaimed Dick. "Do you call yourselves poor? They do not know what real poverty is, do they, Anna?"

"No, indeed!" cried Anna. "Some people do not know where they can get to-morrow's breakfast. Do you remember." she asked, turning to Mary, "how very poor some people are—too poor to have even a white frock."

Mary smiled and patted Anna on the shoulder.

"Ah, no," said Mrs. Beresford, "you are rich, children, in all that makes life worth living." She paused, as she looked at Mr. Beresford, who lay very quiet with his eyes closed. "Yet we have every reason to thank our dear Lord."

"I think we are very happy here," Anna said. She had, by her sweetness of disposition and growing refinement, earned her place as one of the family. "In summer the work is hard; but there are times of rest in the winter, and then it is not the grinding work that wears out body and mind, such as poor people in the city have to do. I am afraid that the peace is too great to last."

"So am I!" said Dick, lifting up his red-head and good-humored face from behind the screen.

Dermot pushed away his book, impatiently.

"Oh, I do wish something would happen! It

is monotonous here," he said, half unconsciously, and then, blushing as he caught the full sense of his own words, he added apologetically. "You know I like to be with you all; but it is hard on a fellow not to have any prospects of doing his best in life! I do wish something would happen."

Mr. Beresford looked at Dermot thoughtfully. Mrs. Beresford took Dermot's hand in sympathy.

"Something has happened," she said, gently. "Your father will tell you what."

"Give me that letter from the bureau, dear," Mr. Beresford said.

Mrs. Beresford gave him the letter.

"Thank you. This is a letter from Byrnes & Stoughton, lawyers, in New York—both old friends of mine—offering to take you into their office, if I will send you there. Do you want to go?"

Dermot's face flushed with pleasure.

"Oh, father!" he said. This was the realization of his dream.

"Of course," continued Mr. Beresford, "this would have been impossible, if Dick were not here to take your place. But, as Dick don't want to leave us——"

"Oh, no!" cried Dick, with a look of bright affection towards Mr. Beresford.

"And as he seems to take to farm life more than you do——"

"Oh, yes!" cried Dick.

"I shall promise Byrnes & Stoughton that you shall go to them."

"But," said Dermot, timidly, "you will have to pay my board, father?"

"Partly," answered Mr. Beresford. "Byrnes & Stoughton will pay you a small sum—equal to about half your expenses—and I shall be able to pay the rest, I hope."

Dermot went over to his father, buried his face in the bedclothes, and cried.

It was such a great kindness! And to know that his father was, in spite of his illness, thinking so much of him! He knew that that dear father would get well. He *must* get well.

The rest of the family were saddened by the news. It seemed like a great break in the happy circle, of which Dermot was the only discontented member.

Dermot saw the gloom of the family.

"I had a fight to-day," he said, his spirits rising, "with that bully, Jim Windsor. He was driving along the road on a big load of wood. One of his horses lost a shoe going down the hill, and he called out to me, 'Bring me that shoe, will you, young fellow?' I would have done it for

anyone else, but I wouldn't for Jim Windsor, so I said, get down and pick it up yourself. I saw that he couldn't, for it was as much as he could do to hold his horses going downhill. He called me names and shook his whip at me. I remembered who he was and paid no attention to him."

"That was wrong," Mr. Beresford said. "Windsor's a bully, because he does not know any better. You ought to have taught him something, by returning good for evil."

Dermot looked uneasy. Then he said—

"You did that with Job Fitts and it didn't come to any good."

"It was right, it was Christian to do as we did. One must be kind, whether it 'pays' in the sense of bringing gratitude to us or not. I know very well that one must keep up one's self-respect, and resist encroachments on one's rights; but there is a way of doing that, without being churlish or unchristian. You saw that Jim Windsor was in 'a tight place'—as Brian says—but you would not help him out."

"I knew how tight the place was—that's the reason I did not help him out. He couldn't get down from his wagon to get the shoe, you see, because he had hard enough work to keep his horses from sliding downhill."

"I am ashamed of you, Dermot."

Dermot turned uneasily in his chair.

"I hate the whole crowd of them!" he cried. "They go to their churches and listen to their ministers, often ignorant people, abusing the Pope and Catholics, and think they are Christians because they hate the Church!"

Mr. Beresford smiled.

"And you, my dear boy, say every morning and night, 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us,' but you go on hating these people. For myself, Dermot, I think that you, who are not ignorant, who have been well instructed, who have had all the great privileges of the Church, will have more to answer for, than these poor people who sneer at Catholics, not knowing what they do."

Dermot hung his head, but said—

"I shall be glad to be away from them."

"Besides," continued his father, "let us look at things in a practical way. To have friends, one must be friendly. The world looks on us with the eyes we look on it. We might be Mormons, but, provided we are 'neighborly' these people would grow friendly to us. There is nothing that overcomes the prejudices of Americans so easily, as good actions and good example in the every-day transactions of life."

"Listen!" said Kathleen, suddenly.

"Cats!" cried Brian.

There was a sound at the door.

Dick opened it and looked out. He heard nothing but the wind among the trees. There was an interval of silence. Then another sound, as of a slight knock at the door. Dermot went this time. Still, nobody was in sight. He thought he saw a head visible among the lilac bushes, at the side of the house; he made a bound forward, and returned dragging Job Fitts.

"What do you mean, you young rascal!" he exclaimed.

"I thought your father would have come," he said. "I want to see him."

"Well, come in and don't be dodging around like a wild beast."

Job entered the warm, cheerful sitting-room. Mr. Beresford held out his hand, kindly. But Job seemed too astonished by the change in him, to speak. He walked awkwardly up to Mr. Beresford's bedside, and shook hands.

"Did you want to see me, Job?"

"Yes," said Job. "But I can't say what I want to say, because I promised I wouldn't open my lips about it. I'll be obliged if you'll let me have a pencil and a sheet of paper."

Mary brought them.

Job laboriously wrote some words on the

paper, folded it, gave it to Mr. Beresford and darted from the room. They heard the front door slam after him.

Mr. Beresford opened the paper and read—

"i take my pen in hand to let you know that jim windsor and his gang will burn your barn to-night."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Beresford.

"Not nonsense, at all," said her husband, "after Dermot's treatment of Windsor, it is probable he will take some revenge."

"He can't be so bad as that," said Mrs. Beresford.

"Well, what's to be done?" asked Brian.

"We shall have to stay up on guard."

"Certainly, Dermot," said Dick.

Mr. Beresford sighed. He was not anxious to trust the defense of his barn to these three. But he was helpless. He turned to Dick.

"Dick," he said, "as the oldest and wisest, I rely on you."

"Very well, sir."

The barn was not insured. Should it be burnt, the family would suffer grievous loss.

Dick went out at once and fitted a long hose to the iron pump. Dermot and Brian examined the fastenings of the barn. Then they gathered

a pile of big stones and put them in a dark corner, ready to be used against the intruders.

"I don't think they'll try such a mean thing," said Brian, "I imagine Job Fitts was frightened into believing it."

Dick shook his head.

"We'd better prepare for the worst."

The only weapons in the house were Mr. Beresford's old-fashioned pistol, and Dermot's gun. It was decided that Dick, in virtue of his age and discretion, should have the pistol.

Mrs. Beresford and the girls, after their first fright, knelt down and said the rosary, as the only means of not losing control of themselves.

Later, they were persuaded to go to their rooms, but not to sleep. Kathleen was the one exception. Nothing could keep her awake.

The boys hid behind the fence, near the barn. The fence-gate stood near the narrow path that led up to the barn. Nobody could approach the barn, except by way of the path.

Eleven o'clock passed. Twelve. One.

Dermot, who felt sleepy and cold, began to laugh at the others for believing Job's nonsense

"Keep quiet and wait," said Dick.

At this time, the country around was white in the moonlight.

Brian fell asleep, his head on a fence-rail.

He raised himself, suddenly. He had ears like a hare.

"Was that a breaking branch?"

"Hist!" whispered Dick.

Three men were slowly creeping up the path.

One struck a match.

He spoke in a low, but distinct tone—

"The matches are all right. I was around here to-day, and I poured some kerosene into the pig-sty. There is a small can of it under the hen-house. I left it there. By George! the blaze will surprise that fool that wouldn't help me to-day—the mean-spirited Romanist!"

It was Jim Windsor's voice.

The men crept, in Indian file, slowly and quietly towards the hen-house.

The boys each seized a large stone, and waited until the men were quite out of the shadows. When they were full in the light, Dick raised his finger.

"You get the kerosene, Abe," Windsor said, to one of his followers, "and we'll set the fire going on the windward side."

"It's a nasty job, and I don't like it." said Abe. "These folks were mighty good to young Fitts."

"That's all very well, but I'm bound to get

even with that young upstart. I'll make him pay for his impudence, and if you don't choose to join me, you can count me out when you want me to do you a turn."

Abe grumbled.

Just then, Dick raised three fingers. The boys obeyed the signal as musicians obey the baton of a musical conductor. Instantly, each raised his arm with a will. There was a howl from the path. Dick sent one big stone after another in quick succession. Dermot and Brian followed his example. Two of the men ran off across the fields as quickly as they could.

One lay in the path, groaning piteously.

The boys went up to him. They recognized Jim Windsor, ghastly pale, with a large cut on his forehead. He looked up and recognized Dermot.

"Don't shoot me," he said, "don't shoot!'

Dermot gave his gun to Dick.

"I am not going to shoot," he said. "Are you much hurt?"

"Just as much as you could hurt me."

"Well, we don't kick men when they're down. We'll help you to the house, and let the law take care of you after that."

Jim made no answer. Dick stooped over him and saw that he had fainted.

"Well, boys," he said, "we'll have to carry this big bully."

They lifted him, and, with some difficulty, carried him into the house.

"Our house seems to be an hospital for the country." Dermot said.

Brian laughed; and then he said, a little nervously—

"I hope they will not come back."

"No fear," said Dick.

Jim Windsor was laid on the floor, in the kitchen. A dash of cold water soon revived him.

Dick held the lantern so that the light of the bull's-eye shown directly into his face.

He opened his eyes, passed his hand over his forehead and muttered—

"Where am I?"

Before replying, Dick dexterously knotted his hands and feet together, with a rope. The big bully was unable to move.

"Where am I," he repeated, trying to rise.

"In our house," said Dermot, "but if you had your deserts, you would be swimming for your life in the river."

The only answer was a growl.

"I think we'd better harness the horse, and drive this fellow up to the magistrate's," said Dick. "What do you say, Brian?"

"He may bleed to death."

"He'll never die of bleeding," said Dick, significantly.

Windsor tried to kick.

"What do you mean," he asked, "by knocking a fellow down when he's doing nothing?"

"We know where the kerosene is, and we know who Abe is, too," said Dermot.

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"Give you up to the law. You will soon find out what barn-burning means."

"Don't do that," Windsor replied, his face growing whiter. "It would kill my old mother to know her son was in prison."

"You did not think of the distress you would have put us in, if you had burned our barn, and father sick, too."

Jim Windsor said nothing.

"You'd better make up your mind to suffer the consequences."

Windsor shuddered.

"I'll give you the horses you saw me driving the other day, if you let me off. I would not have thought of it, if you had not made me mad by your superciliousness."

"You've talked against us ever since we came here."

"Well—didn't you tell everybody that we

were all an ignorant set here? We thought Irish Romanists were inclined to ride a high horse over us, and we found out it was true. You've never had a good word for anybody—I've nothing to say against the family; they didn't have much to say; but I guess they thought like you."

"We'll have to consult father before we take him to the court-house," Dermot said. "You, Brian, go and see if he is awake."

He was awake and very anxious. He was sitting up in bed.

"Bring the man up here," he said, when Dermot had finished his story.

Dermot started in amazement.

"We can't carry him, and we've tied his legs."

"Untie them and let him come."

Dermot saw, by the look in his father's eyes that he must obey.

Mr. Beresford sank back in bed. The light from the lamp by his bedside fell on his pale face, and on the large crucifix nailed against the wall. Mrs. Beresford, who had gone out to quiet the frightened girls, came in.

Dick took out his pistol, when Mr. Beresford's message was given to him, and untied the ropes.

Windsor marched sullenly upstairs, with the boys following him. He hesitated to enter the

room, starting back at the sight of Mr. Beresford's white face.

"Come in," Mr. Beresford said.

Dermot pushed past Windsor, and the four entered the room. Mr. Beresford looked at Windsor with feverishly bright eyes.

"I didn't know you were so sick; or I wouldn't have done it," Windsor began; then, catching sight of the crucifix, which he had only seen before in pictures of the Inquisition, he stopped, with a look of what seemed to be fear in his eyes.

"Don't be afraid," said Mr. Beresford, with a gentle smile, "that is the representation of Our Lord whom you have offended to-night. But He can forgive you, and I will not do less than try to forgive you."

"Mr. Beresford," said Jim Windsor, "I don't want to hear any talk. I know I'm in your power and I've done what I wouldn't have done in cold blood, if I had thought much about it. I suppose the disgrace of being sent to prison will drive my old mother to the grave; but I don't suppose you care about that. I was drunk to-night, and it made me mad to think of how your son here had laughed at me, so I said to Abe Jenkins, we'll burn out the Papists' nest. Enough said. I don't want to hear any talk about religion. It's bad enough to be in a scrape without being talked to about it." Wind-

sor cast his eyes down sullenly, and put his hand up to his bandaged head. "That knock sobered me. I'd give all I'm worth to be out of this box. The farm will go to ruin, if I go to jail, and what's to become of my old mother I don't know." His voice choked; he stamped his foot energetically, as if ashamed of his emotion. "Well, let's get the worst over. There's no use standing here."

"Windsor," said Mr. Beresford, "you don't like Catholics?"

"I haven't much reason to, have I?" answered Windsor, with a jerk of his elbow towards the boys.

"You've gotten Job Fitts' father into bad ways lately, haven't you?"

"It's none of your business. Job's father wouldn't drink so much, if it wasn't for me. I'll admit that."

The boys wondered what this was leading to.

"I want you to promise you will not drink at the tavern with old Fitts, and that you'll encourage him to save his money and live like a Christian."

Windsor laughed hoarsely.

"Your father's gone crazy," he said, turning to the boys. "I'll not have much chance to drink in jail."

"But, if we agree to let you off, and to keep quiet?"

Windsor looked at the white face on the pillow, in amazement.

"Does he mean it, boys?"

"I suppose he does," said Dermot, with some dissatisfaction in his tone.

"I'll promise anything," said Windsor, earnestly, "if you'll let me off and I'll say, Beresford, that you'll never regret it. I'll say that *you* are a Christian, if you are a Catholic."

"They're the same thing, neighbor. I can't look at the crucifix without wanting to forgive you. You can go now. We'll keep quiet—all of us. But I say, Windsor, I want you to help Fitts, and, if I die, I hope you'll do the children a good turn, if you can."

Windsor turned away. Tears rushed to his eyes. He shook the boys' hands, and made an awkward bow to Mrs. Beresford.

"I haven't deserved this," his voice broke. He went towards the door. "I didn't expect it. Nobody else around here would have done it."

He went out onto the landing. He came back and put his head through the door-way.

"If your cross makes you do this sort of thing, I'll put up one myself. Don't be uneasy about Fitts."

He went down the stairs as gently as he could, and they heard him close the front gate.

"He's a dangerous man," said Dermot.

"We've turned him," answered his father. "We've had the best revenge any man can take. Good-night, boys. Jim Windsor will not try to burn another barn."

The boys said good-night. Mr. Beresford had done a bold thing. They would have given Windsor up to the law. But in consultation, they—even including Dermot—admitted that Mr. Beresford had made a friend, and perhaps, a better man of Windsor.

"After all," said Dick, thoughtfully, "if we make better men of ourselves and of our neighbors, we fulfill the greatest of the commandments. We show that we love Him, and that we love them."

"Don't preach," answered Brian, yawning, and going into his room. "Father *is* a good Catholic and no mistake."

After this, there was a change in the attitude of the people to the Beresfords. Job Fitts' word did not go for much, but in the discussions at the village grocery store, Jim Windsor's went for a great deal. Whenever the subject of religion came up, Windsor always said a good word for Catholics in his own way.

"I don't care for what the Catholics used to be. I suppose they have been good, bad, and indifferent. I take 'em as I find 'em, and I don't want to know any better people than the Beresfords."

This had its effect. The little neighborly offices, which Mrs. Beresford had hitherto been pained to miss, were given.

Mrs. Thorne was not afraid to "run over," with a particularly nice dish of pudding, or something of that kind, and very often, other housewives in the vicinity came. Opinion had changed.

Even Dermot began to see that the policy of forgiveness, was better than that of defiance. Rails were not so often taken out of the fences, and the cows let into other fields, where they ought not to have gone. The boys were treated civily at the village store.

The neighbors, having once become acquainted with Mrs. Beresford, acquired a habit of "dropping in" to see her. The women regretted that "poor Mrs. Beresford," could not take part in their "church sociables." Job's father paid the Beresfords a visit one day. He had not been drinking too much for some time. He nodded to Mrs. Beresford, and said he had come to see "what sort of people Job's admirations were."

"I tell you, ma'am," he said, "that boy is

never tired of talking about you and your family. It's not everybody that would have been so kind. The poor boy needed it."

"And the poor boy needs it," Mrs. Beresford answered, noticing Mr. Fitts' red nose and watery eyes, "you ought to be kind to him yourself. Why don't you try to give him a good home?"

"I'm a poor, weak mortal," said Mr. Fitts, beginning to wipe his eyes with his handkerchief. "I never was much to work; but I have ideas. I'm full of ideas."

"You ought to cultivate good ideas, and put them into practice."

"I was never much to work," repeated Mr. Fitts, disconsolately. "Job's mother, she was the worker. But she died."

A scornful reply was on Mrs. Beresford's lips, but she suppressed it. She remembered the doctrine she had been preaching to Dermot.

Brian and Dick came in, and were introduced to Mr. Fitts.

"Good boys, I suppose," he said. "Are they both yours?"

"One is mine, the other has been adopted," said Mrs. Beresford, with a genial smile at Dick.

"I wish my boy was as healthy-looking, and as well dressed," said Mr. Fitts, with a sigh.

"Why don't you look after him?" said Dick. "If you did not drink so much——"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Bedsford.

Job Fitts' father wiped his eyes with the back of his hand.

"I was never much of a hand to work." Then he added, after a pause, made to give his hearers an opportunity to express sympathy. "I haven't drank anything nigh into a month. Jim Windsor said he would smash my head, if he caught me drinking."

"Good for Jim Windsor," said Brian. "Mother, Dick's had an idea."

"I'm full of ideas, but I was never a great hand to work," murmured Mr. Fitts.

"Dick wants to plant celery and asparagus," said Brian, enthusiastically. "His uncle has got back from Ireland, and has taken a stand in a market, at Philadelphia, and he wrote to Dick, and Dick wrote to him, and then Dick asked him to buy things from us. Dick's uncle said he wanted celery and asparagus."

"And cauliflower," added Dick, his face glowing with pleasure. "He says he'll give us twelve hundred dollars for an acre of good cauliflower, next year. I just got his letter. The asparagus will take three years to grow. I understand all about celery-growing."

Mrs. Beresford smiled. She was glad to see Dick and Brian so much interested in the farm work.

The boys went upstairs to consult with Mr. Beresford. Job Fitts' father asked if he might go, too. Mrs. Beresford politely assented.

Mr. Beresford said, after listening to the boys, that they had better plant the cauliflower in February. He gathered, from Mr. Devlin's letter—Mr. Devlin was Dick's uncle, who had come back from Ireland, after a short stay there- that the cauliflower was most in demand.

"One thing at a time," Mr. Beresford said, smiling. "You will need to sow them at once, and keep them through the winter."

"No, that will not do," interrupted Job Fitts' father.

Brian shrugged his shoulders, and Dick laughed, with some contempt in his voice.

"Let him go on," said Mr. Beresford. "Why not, Mr. Fitts?"

"I'm chock full of ideas," said Mr. Fitts, "but I'm not much on work. I'll tell you, Mr. Beresford, that if you plant cauliflower now, the plants will not live even under glass. You'd have to keep 'em covered with straw, and even then they would not live."

"When would you plant them?"

"In February—that's your time. You'd better put 'em down in the hollow, near the spring. It's always cool there, and cauliflower lives best in coolness. It is not like cabbage."

"Thank you, Mr. Fitts; we'll need some help. It's too late to begin with the celery."

"You're right," said Mr. Fitts.

Dick and Brian were surprised at Mr. Fitts' knowledge of farming. Afterwards, Mr. Beresford told them that they ought not to despise a man, because he seemed incapable.

"We got a valuable hint from Mr. Fitts, although he seemed very stupid. It's just as foolish to judge a book by its cover, as a man by his coat."

Mr. Beresford asked Job's father to stay to dinner.

Mr. Fitts appeared to improve visibly, under the influence of kindness. It was evident, from his talk, that he knew a good deal about farming.

As he was going away, he said—

"How would you like us to come and work for you? I'm not much on work, but Job is. He'd work for you."

"I'll think about it," Dick answered, "and ask Mr. Beresford."

Dick had quietly taken charge of things since Mr. Beresford had become ill. Brian felt his superiority in every-day work and gladly took his

advice. Mr. Beresford, on hearing Mr. Fitts' proposition, laughed. "We'll see what we can do, later."

The winter glided by. The family at the farm—"Beresfords'" as the neighbors called the place—found plenty of amusement and occupation, no work was ever done at night. Sometimes, Mr. Beresford was well enough to be helped downstairs. There was an extra concert on these gala nights.

By this time, the Beresfords' neighbors had become unusually friendly. Little delicacies were sent to Mr. Beresford, and occasionally, an old farmer or his wife would drop in to see the "images," and talk of their enormity. They were astonished to find that, even the young Beresfords had read the Bible, and that they could quote Scripture in defense of their faith.

It was the general verdict throughout the neighborhood, that Catholics might not be so bad, after all. And many were the religious discussions that arose out of the presence of the Beresfords there.

Father Hogan, whose church was some distance away, came over to spend two days with the Beresfords. He said Mass one morning, and all the family received the Blessed Eucharist.

It happened that Job Fitts had been sent over

to bring some seed, sent by Mr. Thorne. He stood, staring and open-mouthed, while the Mass proceeded. When Brian rang the little bell at the consecration, and they all knelt devoutly, Job prostrated himself, too.

"I can't tell why I did it," he said, afterwards. "It seemed as if I had to."

Father Hogan patted Job on the head; although he shrank from him at first, as if he were a wild animal.

There was not much to do that day. Dick and the young folks spent the morning in discussing a grand concert, for the evening, in honor of Father Hogan.

"Why should not we ask some of the people near us?" asked Mr. Beresford, when Dermot and Mary came to discuss some knotty point with him. "There is plenty of space in the sitting-room."

Father Hogan, who was sitting near Mr. Beresford's bed, smiled at the suggestion.

"They would not come," he said. "They would not enter a Catholic house, especially, if a priest were here."

"We ought to try to get them to come." Then Mr. Beresford told Father Hogan their experience.

"Good example is the best softener of the

prejudices of the people around. Preaching and arguments are in vain, if one does not practice. Ask some of your neighbors, by all means," said the priest, gravely.

Dermot did not like the idea. The others were pleased with it. Brian and Mary drove out in the wagon, to invite the families near them. Mary enjoyed the excitement of the event, just as much as she would one of Alice Howe's grand parties. Dermot reluctantly promised to write the programmes. Still, since he had seen the change in the neighbors' feelings, wrought by the policy of conciliation, he had begun to feel that he must have been wrong.

Chairs and benches were collected and placed in the sitting-room, which was festooned with evergreens and the paper flowers which Anna Doran had taught Kathleen to make. Mrs. Beresford resolved to serve coffee, cakes, apples, and cider, during a pause in the concert.

Father Hogan entered into the spirit of the festivity. In spite of his cassock, he cut down more evergreens than either Dermot or Dick. Mr. Beresford, listening to the reports of the workers, almost seemed to be well again.

"Dear me!" said Daphne Higgins, who lived on a thrifty farm down in the Hollow. "Dear me!" she said, as her husband came in at noon.

"What do you think, Josh. The Beresfords are going to have a concert to-night, and we've got an invite."

"You don't mean to go, Daph," said Josh, raising his head from the basin, in which he was washing his face. "The priest's going to be there."

"Well, I am going, Josh, priest or no priest. I wouldn't hurt Mrs. Beresford's feelings for the world. Nobody knows how kind she was to our Lib, when she was sick. I'm not afraid of the priest. If everybody was as good as the Beresfords, I wish there were more priests." Daphne looked around uneasily as she spoke, as if she felt that she was making a shocking admission.

"I'm not finding fault. You needn't snap my head off," answered Josh. "We'll go—I like the Beresfords, if they are Romanists."

The rumor of the Beresfords' concert set the neighborhood in a flutter of excitement. Mr. Thorne and Mrs. Thorne announced their intention of going, but Miss Sabina Thorne wept. Her new silk gown was not made yet, and she said she would not go to the house of such "stylish" city folks without it. Finally, she was persuaded to accept the invitation.

Father Hogan had a good tenor voice, and he volunteered to sing.

A little after seven o'clock, Mr. Beresford was put in his place near the grate; and shortly afterwards, the guests began to come. The room was quite crowded. It looked very pretty, lighted by a dozen candles. The bright flowers glowing in the dark green of the festoons, excited special admiration.

"This *is* style," Miss Sabina Thorne, who had spent two weeks in town, was heard to say.

Father Hogan entered, in his cassock, and a thrill of awe ran through the room. Mr. Beresford introduced each person to him. He was exceedingly genial and pleasant.

By the time that Dermot had given out the programmes, the guests had concluded that a priest might be very nice. The programmes were neatly written on small sheets of paper, on each of which Mary had drawn a flower design.

—PROGRAMME—

OVERTURE—"Semiramide"—*Piano* MARY BERESFORD
"MARY OF ARGYLE"—*Soprano* MRS. BERESFORD
POPULAR AIRS—*Violin* BRIAN BERESFORD
"LAST ROSE OF SUMMER"—*Tenor* FATHER HOGAN
"CARNIVAL OF VENICE"—*Piano* KATH. BERESFORD
"BACK TO OUR MOUNTAINS"—*Duet* A. & R. DORAN
IMITATION OF MOCKING-BIRD—*Violin*
BRIAN BERESFORD

—INTERMISSION—

NEGRO MELODIES—*Quartette*
DERMOT, BRIAN, AND KATHLEEN BERESFORD, AND RICHARD DORAN

"TEN LITTLE INDIANS"—*Violin and Voice*
BRIAN AND KATHLEEN BERESFORD
"SHE WORE A WREATH OF ROSES"
MRS. BERESFORD
"MONASTERY BELLS" MARY BERESFORD
"THE GYPSY COUNTESS" R. AND A. DORAN
"ROCKED IN THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP"
DERMOT BERESFORD
"AVE MARIA"—Gounod—*Voice and Violin*
MRS. BERESFORD AND BRIAN

Every piece on the programme was demanded twice, except the overture. Dermot had written a translation of the words of the "Ave Maria" on the second page of the programmes.

Father Hogan's clear, pure tenor was well suited to "The Last Rose of Summer," and when the last tenor note died away, there was a dead silence of approval. Then he sang "The Minstrel Boy," when he could no longer refuse.

The most effective piece was Mrs. Beresford's "Ave Maria." Mrs. Beresford watched the guests with some anxiety, as they turned the leaves and read the "Hail Mary."

Brian threw all his skill into the violin prelude. Mrs. Beresford began with exquisite sweetness, and then, borne up by the violin, burst into fervent devotion. The violin seemed to repeat after her, "Ave Maria." And Mrs. Beresford felt her heart glow with pity for the poor souls before her, which had never known how sweet it

was to love the Mother of God. With all her strength, she prayed for them.

Brian, generally not very careful, caught her spirit. When the last low note died away, echoed by the violin, Job Fitts burst into tears.

"I can't help it," he sobbed. "It makes me think of mother, and lots of things."

The audience was visibly affected. As Daphne Higgins said, "It *was* singing and no mistake. It made a cold chill run up my back."

When the applause had died away, Mrs. Beresford did not sing, but played a low fantasia in a minor key.

Coffee and cakes were served; the cider and apples dispatched, and everybody talked to everybody else. Mrs. Beresford's dainty coffee-set was admired, as well as the young folks' "manners" in their attention to the older ones. Mary, Kathleen, and Anna had white gowns, with bunches of red geranium pinned to them. They looked very nice. Father Hogan talked and laughed, and Mrs. Beresford paid particular attention to the most bashful people in the room. The concert was a great success. The Beresfords had conquered their neighbors by kindness.

The next day Dermot spent in packing his trunk. He had only one fear. If Dick should

leave the farm, he should have to return from his law studies to work on it.

Dick came up to him, as he was thoughtfully putting his books into a box.

"Don't bother yourself," he said, putting his hand on Dermot's shoulder. "I know what is worrying you. My mother is happy with our uncle, Mr. Devlin, and she wants Anna and me to stay here. I promise you I'll stay until they make a lawyer of you in New York. I like the work, and I mean to be grateful."

Dermot turned to Dick with tears in his eyes. He took Dick's hand in both of his. He felt now that gratitude and kindness had levelled the barrier between them. Dick was no longer the poor, dependent youth, taken out of charity, but a friend, richer than a millionaire; for what money can buy hearts? What advantages are better than frankness and kindness?

Dermot's day for going came at last. He was sorry to leave his father, but he loved the city, and the humdrum work of the farm was tiresome and monotonous. Mrs. Beresford hated to part with him, yet she fondly hoped to see a career opened before him. Dermot looked old for his age, was staunch in his religious duties, and used to the ways of cities. She had little fear that he would

forget his lessons. She smiled and wept as she said—

"God bless you!"

He was off—Dick and Brian went with him to the station—and the old life began again without him.

During that winter, all the inmates of the farm studied hard. Anna Doran made great progress. Nobody would have recognized in the gentle, ladylike girl, she to whom Mary had lent the white gown to make her First Communion.

Dick, too, made advances in his studies. The family was very happy.

"Cheerfulness" was the motto of the house.

At Christmas Dermot came back, with a good account of himself. They noticed that he left reluctantly.

In February, the cauliflower was planted.

Mr. Beresford, who gained some strength as the spring approached, gave Mr. Fitts a little, two-story, wooden house that stood on the edge of his farm. There Job and his father took up their abode, and watched the precious plants.

The kindness and patience of the Beresfords had their effect on the old man. Gradually, seeing that they were never idle, he went to work. As for Job, he was a changed boy. He spent two nights of the week in the Beresfords' sitting-room.

One day, Father Hogan asked Brian and Anna if they would be sponsors for Job. He had quietly resolved to become a Catholic. Mr. Fitts followed him into the Church, and afterwards led a very examplary life. It was he who in later days collected most of the money through the country, to build a chapel near the Beresfords.' Mr. and Mrs. Thorne began to go to Mass.

"I'm only waiting till Easter," Mrs. Thorne said. "I feel that there must be Truth in your Church, since you, who naturally know better than any of us, are so good. Ike and I will join your Church at Easter."

"Beresfords'" is a place of consolation and comfort for the neighbors.

The cauliflower experiment was successful. The Beresfords needed no money after that. Dick's share of the profits enabled him to buy a smaller farm next to "Beresfords.'"

Brian and he are looked upon as the most promising young farmers of the place.

"How did you do at all?" asked Mr. Devlin, when he came to pay a visit to his nephew and niece, accompanied by their mother. He looked at the smiling fields—at the happy faces of all who had assembled on the porch after supper, and heard the gay greeting that a neighbor sent to Mr. Beresford.

"You must have had a hard time. How did you and the boys work your way?"

"God helped us," said Mr. Beresford, reverently, "and we tried to live according to his precepts—to fulfill the end for which he made us."

"It was a lucky day when I lent you that white gown," said Mary to Anna. "What could we have done without you and Dick."

"But what could we have done without *you*?" asked Mrs. Doran.

The setting sun flashes on a figure coming up the road. It is Dermot.

"I have passed!" he cries. "I'm a lawyer now!"

Mrs. Beresford looked at her son, wistfully. She had hoped that he would be a priest. Brian understood the look, and whispered something to her. Her face brightened.

"You!" she said. "You will go to the seminary next year! Oh, how good God is!"

Everybody cheers. The Beresfords have worked their way to the beginning of life, although one of them—the father—is about to leave it. They can not fail to succeed in the best way, for they well know its object: "To know God, to love Him, and serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next."

THE BOYS IN THE BLOCK.

I.

FATHER Raymond was instructing his First Communion class. He held it three times a week—on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday nights. Twenty boys of various sizes came tramping through the streets and pulled the bell-handle at the basement door.

It was about eight o'clock on the usual Wednesday night. The Bowery glittered with lights; the elevated trains thundered at intervals overhead; Ah Wung, who kept a laundry at the edge of the Chinese quarter, gazed serenely at the vases of hideous flowers that stood on a shelf over his ironing table. His eye caught Tom Keefe's as Tom peered through the window. Ah Wung shook his head, and muttered something unpleasant in his mysterious language against this 'Melican boy. The glance of the 'Melican boy had rudely brought him back from a dream of the Flowery Kingdom, when those hideous buds and blossoms in their dragon-covered vases were made. But Tom Keefe meant Ah Wung

no harm. The last time he had been at confession, he had told the priest how often he had "chased the Chinee"—a form of amusement much in vogue in his part of the city—and he did not intend to do it again.

He was innocently wondering how Ah Wung managed to get his shirts so glossy ; but Ah Wung did not know that. He suddenly rose out of his beautiful dream of Canton, or some other Celestial city, where he hoped that his bones would be buried, and he began very grimly to fill his mouth with water, and to spurt it out on the clothes before him. He kept an eye on Tom, and Tom knew, from previous experience, that Ah Wung was ready to spurt a mouthful over him at the slightest provocation.

A clock struck eight o'clock. Tom looked around. Just then a shrill whistle sounded on the other side of the street.

"All right," Tom said; and he whistled, too.

He was joined by another boy of about his own age, which was thirteen.

" Late, Ned ? "

" No. Father Raymond does not begin work till ten minutes after eight."

" What kept you ? "

" Oh, you see, John didn't get in till after seven. It was a late day at his office and Larry

was stuck with six *Telegrams*, and seven *Mails and Expresses* until nearly seven, for the snow made people hurry along, so that they didn't stop to buy papers. And after supper was over, I had to wash the dishes, for it was my night, you know. Come along!"

Ned looked at Ah Wung and gave a startling howl, that made the poor washer-man start in terror.

"Don't," said Tom. "Let the Heathen alone. Father Raymond says they're fellow-creatures like us."

"They may be," answered Ned, "but I'm glad I'm not a fellow-creature like them. Good-bye, cork soles."

"Father Raymond said that we were not to plague them."

"All right. I will not. But I forgot."

Ned Symthe is a ruddy, freckled boy, with a snub nose, a sly twinkle in his blue eyes, and big hands and feet, which seem very prominent, for he does not know what to do with them. His clothes are patched, but warm; he wears a woollen scarf around his neck and tied over his ears.

Tom Keefe is paler and more thoughtful-looking. He is much thinner and taller than Ned, and he walks more slowly, as if he were tired. His clothes are more carefully kept and

better fitting than his companion's. Looking at them, one could see at a glance that Tom had a mother and Ned had not.

Father Raymond sat at a desk in the church basement with nearly all his boys ranged before him. He was dignified, but benevolent-looking. Even his spectacles seemed to reflect things good-humoredly.

"Where's Larry to-night?" he asked, as Tom and Ned entered. Larry was a year younger than his brother Ned.

"Please, Father, it's his washing night," said Ned.

Father Raymond looked at Ned with a slight air of surprise. Several boys giggled. Ned kicked the nearest one.

"Order!" said Father Raymond.

When everything was quiet he began the Our Father. Then he and the boys said the Hail Mary and the Gloria.

The lesson began.

Most of the boys had been to confession, but none of them had made his First Communion.

"'What's a Sacrament?'" asked Father Raymond, of a small boy at the end of the bench. He hung his head and stammered.

"Don't be afraid, Charlie," Father Raymond said, kindly.

"There are seven—" began the small boy.

A dozen hands were put up.

"Next!"

"A ceremony—" began another boy, eagerly.

"Next!"

Tom Keefe tried to collect his senses. It was near his turn. Oh, dear, if he had only paid particular attention to that answer.

"Next!—next!—next!"

Father Raymond's "nexts" were like the snapping of a whip, sharp and quick.

"Well, Tom Keefe!"

"All the Sacraments give grace—" mumbled Tom.

"Next!"

Father Raymond's face expressed astonishment.

"That always made them feel mean," they said.

Tom sat down, his ears tingling. As he did so the answer came to him, and he put up his hand.

"Too late," said Father Raymond. "What is a Sacrament?"

"Please, Father," cried Ned Smythe, trembling, and almost ready to cry, "please say that over again?"

Father Raymond repeated the question as if he were reading to very small and stupid children.

The boys felt ashamed of themselves.

"Oh, I know!" cried Ned. "'A Sacrament is an outward sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace.'"

"It is nearly time somebody answered it," commented Father Raymond.

The lesson went on, with many disasters. The boys worked hard all day, and it was hard for them to get down to the study of even the easy chapters of the Catechism. When some of the boys had called out "Good-night, Father," and had run out into the street, Father Raymond called Ned to his desk.

Ned went, expecting a reprimand. Father Raymond looked at him kindly.

"Why isn't Larry here?" he asked again.

"It's his turn to wash, Father."

Father Raymond looked puzzled.

"John takes care of us, you know, Father," explained Ned, "and he makes us take turns in doing the work. He does the washing one week, I take the second, and Larry the third. Larry has had to do it two weeks in succession, because he did not come home one night until after ten o'clock. He went to the theatre. John keeps up discipline."

"Do you mean to say that John and you, and Larry, keep house yourselves?"

"Yes," answered Ned. "Of course, Father, at the old stand, where father and mother used to live. Father was killed by a wall falling on him, two years ago, and mother didn't live six months after that; so we have to look after ourselves."

Father Raymond smiled.

"Are you a good cook, Ned?"

"No," said Ned, very earnestly, "John is a good cook. You ought to taste his hash. It *is* splendid! Oh, my! I can wash, though."

"Yes, he can, Father," put in Tom Keefe, forgetting his manners, in his anxiety to support his friend. "His shirt bosoms are almost as shiny as Ah Wung's."

"I don't sprinkle 'em with my mouth, like a Heathen, either," said Ned, proudly.

Father Raymond smiled. He seldom laughed when the boys were present. If he laughed, they would be sure to attempt "monkey tricks" to make him laugh again. He knew them well.

"Tell Larry to come to my room in the parochial house, to-morrow night. How many boys are there in your block?"

"Thirteen," answered Ned, promptly. "It's a very short block, you know. There are the Murphys, two of 'em, the three Malones, Tom and Bill Keefe, we three, and Alfred Schwatz,

and his brothers, Michael and Henry. You mean the Catholic boys, don't you, Father?"

"Oh, yes."

"That's all, then. The Italians don't count."

"Yes, they do; but Father Bianchi looks after them. Some of them are very nice boys."

Ned and Tom made no answer. They had made up their minds about the "eye-talians." There was a constant warfare going on between the Americans in the block, and the Italians. Father Raymond wanted to stop it.

"Henry and Michael Schwatz and the Malone boys do not come to the First Communion class. Do you know them?"

"Oh, yes," said Tom, "they're good fellows, but they like to go to the theatre on Saturday nights, and then they don't feel like getting up in the morning."

Father Raymond shook his head gravely.

"Could not you boys bring them to the class?"

"Not much!" cried Ned; then he reddened and stammered, "I did not mean to talk that way, Father, I forgot myself."

Father Raymond nodded.

"Well, good-night, boys. Study your Catechism lesson well for next class-night, and don't

be too hard on the Italians. Stop—here are two tickets for a concert, to-morrow night."

The boys took the tickets, and thanked the priest. He bent down to finish a letter. They looked at the tickets, and read the programme on the back of them.

"A lot of hi-falutin' music we can't understand!" said Tom. "If it was only Gilmore's, now! I tell you, he had the boss band at Coney Island, last summer."

"It's no use to have Father Raymond waste his tickets on us. We don't care for this classical stuff;" and he spelt out, "Moonlight Smata." "What does that mean? I'd rather hear Harrigan sing 'A Pitcher of Beer.'"

Ned took the tickets back to Father Raymond, and said, respectfully—

"We hope you will give these tickets to someone proper, Father. The music would be just wasted on us. We'd rather go to the theayter. We're much obliged. You don't happen to have any bill-poster tickets, do you? They'd be good enough for us."

Tom Keefe pulled Ned's jacket as hard as he could. He was shocked by such a bold request. Nevertheless, he waited anxiously until Father Raymond sealed his envelope, in the hope that the good priest might possibly produce some

theatre tickets from the breast of his cassock, where he was supposed to keep a supply of pictures, medals, scapulars, pen-knives, and lead-pencils.

Father Raymond knew very well that Ned did not mean the faintest disrespect. What would have been disrespectful in boys of better breeding, was simply the usual way of these children, who were without much direction at home.

"I wish you boys would go less to the theatre," said Father Raymond. "Once in a while, it does you no harm; but as a regular thing, it is bad."

"But it brightens a fellow up, when he's been selling papers all day," said Tom, "and things are rather dull at home. Oh, Father Raymond,"—Tom was so sure of the kind priest's sympathy, that he often made sudden confidences, which gave Father Raymond many clews in dealing with the boys—"you ought to see 'The Cow-Boy's Revenge!' It *is boss.* There's a fellow that got into trouble, because he killed his own brother, and he goes to Texas, and resolves to blow himself up with dynamite, which he carries in a ring on his little finger, and he meets a cow-boy, and the cow-boy sees a scar on his third finger, and says, 'Methinks I see one I

have known,' in a thunderous tone, and then a damsel—she was a girl with red cheeks, but the people in the play call her a damsel—rushes out of a castle and says, 'He-is-your-long-lost-brother-there-is-dynamite-in-his-ring,' and then the cow-boy grips the ring, and there is an awful explosion, and then——"

"Stop," said Father Raymond, "that's enough. What good does all that stuff do you?"

"It livens a fellow up," said Ned, in a discouraged voice. He thought that Father Raymond might have waited till he told how the dynamite blew up a desperate villian, who was concealed in the castle, and how the long-lost brothers were happily united; but Father Raymond did not seem to care.

"Next week, I'll tell you the story of St. Sebastian," said Father Raymond. "It's true, and more thrilling than those cow-boy lies."

"Thank you, Father," said the boys.

"And, Ned, give my best regards to John, and tell him I'd like to see him sometime. Keep out of mischief. God bless you both."

II.

The block was a short row of houses in a New York street, leading into the Bowery. The Bowery, it is said, has its name from the fact that it was, in old Knickerbocker days, a pleasant rural walk—a real "bower" of trees and shrubs. Looking at the row of glistening stores, hearing the clatter of the trains on the elevated railroad, it is hard to believe that the long, bristling thoroughfare was ever a country place.

The houses in the block were very tall. The lower part of each contained a store, the cellar, too, was used either as a store, or as a dwelling for very poor people. All the people in the block were poor, but some were poorer than others. These cellars were generally occupied by Chinese. The block contained a good many representations of various nationalities. Among them were several Italian families.

The boys in the block were divided into two cliques—one made up of the Italians and the other of the boys already mentioned. Their hands were against each other and both were against the Chinese.

So far, Father Raymond had in vain preached peace. There was no peace.

Guiseppe Baldini let a piece of water-melon fall on Ned Keefe's head. Ned punched Guiseppe when he had a chance.

Later, in the Catechism class for the Italians, Guiseppe had been asked if he understood the meaning of forgiving his enemies.

"*Si si*," he had answered at once.

"If somebody hit you," asked the teacher, "would you forgive them?"

"*Si*—oh, yes," answered Guiseppe, readily, thinking of Ned Keefe, "if I couldn't catch him!"

Beppo Testa tied a tomato can to the tail of Ned Smythe's dog, and Ned Smythe declared war against the three Testas, who played the harp, flute, and violin for a living.

Everybody in the block was soon more or less mixed up in the feud. It made the street in front of the block unsafe. The Italian boys, fewer in number than the others, had to get up early and run off about their business as quickly as they could. They prudently tried to get home before the others.

Every floor of the block contained, at least, three families. The war was not carried on inside the house. An occasional fight on the stairs occured; but by common consent there was a truce once the house was gained.

Tom and Ned went, with the best intentions,

towards home after Father Raymond dismissed them. They felt virtuous They were conscious of being truly good. They thought how much better they were than the other fellows who did not know their Catechism lesson.

Boys in this rarely complacent state of mind had better be careful. A boy that feels his weakness is less likely to get into scrapes, than he who thinks he is much better than his fellow-beings.

Tom and Ned walked on, sedately whistling a favorite tune in unison. As they neared the block, they saw Guiseppe Baldini and Beppo Testa crossing the street.

"Let's frighten them," Ned said.

"No," Tom answered, "Father Raymond would not like it."

"Just for fun, you know."

Tom hesitated. Beppo carried his violin and Guiseppe had a bag strung across his back.

Beppo was a short boy, with large black eyes, white teeth, and black curly hair. Cold as it was, his ragged jacket was wide open in front. He had a pleasant expression, and he smiled whenever he had a chance.

Guiseppe was taller, not so dark, more quiet and thoughtful than Beppo.

Neither Guiseppe nor Beppo saw the two other boys.

"Come now," whispered Ned, "we'll frighten them."

Tom, in spite of his good resolutions and self-complacency, did not resist this appeal. He and Ned darted behind a cart which stood in the street.

Beppo was softly singing "Santa Lucia." Guiseppe looked around. Who could tell whether the Murphys, the Malones, the Schwatzes, or other enemies might not be laying in wait? Guiseppe stopped. He thought he heard a sound.

"Whoop! give it to the Dagoes!" cried Ned, suddenly uttering the war-cry of his faction, and rushing from his retreat, followed by Tom.

Guiseppe and Beppo stood still a minute, and then probably remembering that such attacks were never made by their enemies, except in large parties; turned and fled.

Ned and Tom ran after them, uttering unearthly yells. It seemed to the Italian boys as if half a dozen of their tormentors were on their track.

Guiseppe and Beppo made a dash towards the door of their dwelling; but Tom, who had now forgotten everything but the excitement of the chase, headed them off. Guiseppe jumped backwards, not noticing that the entrance to the cellar had been left open, and fell headlong with a

cry of fright, which, as he struck the ground with a thud, changed into a groan.

Beppo would have fallen, too, had not Tom caught him. As it was, he was knocked against the wall. He tried hard to save his violin by holding it in his arms. It was in vain. The force which pushed him crushed the instrument between him and the wall.

Beppo uttered a cry of despair, and carried the ruins of his violin to the light of the street-lamp. He wrung his hands.

"He couldn't go on more if he'd killed a baby," muttered Ned, feeling very much ashamed of himself. "It's only an old fiddle."

Beppo sobbed and gesticulated under the lamp-post.

"I am lost! I am lost!" he exclaimed in Italian. "It's my father's violin."

"Don't be a fool!" said Ned. "Don't cry like a big baby. The thing can be mended, can't it!"

"Never!" cried the Italian boy, "never—no!"

Ned saw that the violin was split clearly in two. The strings hung loose. It had parted, so that they clung to one piece, while the other was stringless. Ned's heart sank. He had a good heart. Oh, why had he not followed Father Raymond's advice!

Tom had gone down into the cellar in search of Guiseppe. He found him kneeling on the ground at the foot of the steps, trying to gather the apples which had been scattered from his bag as he fell.

Tom stooped down and tried to help him. It was dark and it was hard to find the apples. Tom lit a match. He saw that Guiseppe had a cut on his head.

Guiseppe recognized him and went up the steps, clutching his bag.

"Wait a minute," Tom said. "You'd better let me help you."

"You've already helped me to a cut head," answered Guiseppe, "and lost my apples. I don't want any more help."

When Guiseppe reached the street and saw the condition of Beppo's violin, he became very angry.

"You are nice Christians," he said. "You chase poor boys and try to hurt them. You are worse than the heretics. Poor Beppo can no longer play. He must starve, and Nina must starve His brother, Filippo, is sick, and Ricardo is away in the country. What can be done now that Beppo has no violin?"

Ned and Tom felt very bad and uncomfortable. They were silent. If Guiseppe had raved

about his own misfortunes, they would have answered him in their own way. But the sight of Guiseppe forgetting his injuries in those of another, made them feel like brutes.

Beppo leaned against the wall of the house, bending over his crushed violin. He was the very picture of despair.

"You'd better go home," said Ned, gruffly, to hide his feeling.

Beppo made no answer.

"Perhaps he's afraid to go home," Tom suggested. "Let's go with him and tell his people we did it."

"Very well," said Ned, reluctantly, and then, turning to Guiseppe, "you can tell your folks that I cut your head, and that I lost your apples. If they want satisfaction, tell them they can take it out of me."

"Will you give me back the apples?" demanded Guiseppe. "They are very dear. I bought them to sell on a stand. I have lost a dozen, at least."

Ned made no reply to this practical proposition. He took Beppo's violin, and caught Beppo by the shoulder. Assisted by Tom, he half-dragged, half-carried the weeping boy up to a room on the fourth floor. He knocked at the door.

"Hush," whispered a voice within.

The door opened. The boys saw an interior dimly lighted by a kerosene lamp. On a shelf against the wall was a colored statue of the Blessed Virgin, ornamented with some artificial flowers. There were three beds in the room, which was without carpet or other furniture, except a stool, a chair, and a table.

A little girl appeared in the door-way.

"Hush," she whispered. "I have just made Filippo go to sleep."

She was an olive-skinned little girl, with large black eyes and a sweet expression. She wore a dress rather longer than American girls of her age—which was about thirteen—wear. Around her shoulders was drawn a gayly colored, three-cornered shawl.

She looked at Ned and Tom, and the smile on her face turned to a look of fear.

"Have you hurt Beppo?"

"Ah, no, Nina," sobbed Beppo, "I wish they had! They have made me break our father's violin."

"Broken!" cried Nina, seizing the mutilated violin and kissing it. "And the dear father—may he rest in peace—loved it so!"

"What a fuss about an old fiddle!" muttered Ned.

Tom made no answer. Nina's grief caused him to feel more like a brute than ever.

"No good ever comes of disobeying Father Raymond," he said. "We've done a mean thing, Ned, and no mistake. It makes me sick to think of it."

"We'd better go," Ned said.

Nina looked at them reproachfully.

"What did Beppo do to you?"

"He made a face at me the other day," responded Ned promptly.

Nina's eyes flashed.

"And for that you broke our precious violin? How will Beppo earn money now? He cannot play Filippo's harp, and Ricardo is in the country. We can no longer buy medicine for Filippo. We must starve!" Nina's gestures grew more impressive. She pointed to the statue of the Madonna. "How can you expect the Blessed Virgin to love you?"

Ned felt very uneasy.

"If Beppo had turned around and showed fight, like a man, he would not have broken his fiddle," he said.

"But you frightened us in the dark." said Beppo, sobbing still. There are so many of you in the block. We thought that you were a great crowd.

Nina's eyes flashed again.

"You Irish and American boys are cowards," she said. "You attack our Italian boys because you think they will run."

Ned clenched his fist.

"Oh, yes," Nina said, sarcastically, "hit me. I'm only a girl, but I will not run. I am surprised that Father Raymond does not teach you better."

"He does," said Tom.

"I'm sorry we did not mind him," said Ned.

"Come in, Beppo," Nina continued, "come—we will, at least, starve together. I hope *you* are satisfied with your work."

"Good-night," Ned answered, feebly.

"Good-night, *gentlemen*," responded Nina, shutting the door.

But the boys' quick ears heard both Beppo and her sobbing over the violin.

"I never felt so mean in my life," said Tom.

"They are making an awful fuss over that fiddle. We'll have to help them some way."

"I don't see how we can, Ned, we have as much as we can do to help ourselves."

"I wish I could blame it all on somebody else. I do, indeed! But I can't. It was all our fault!"

"That little girl gave us some home thrusts. It's a nasty business, Ned. We'll have to stop plaguing the Italians. It never struck me before

that we were doing them much harm. I wish we hadn't acted like—like—"

"Cowards," Ned said.

III.

The washing was almost over when Ned Smythe, in a despondent frame of mind, reached home. John was trying hard to master a tough sum in fractions, for, although he was nearly twenty-one years of age, he had never had time to go to school for more than a few months in all his life. He was now a porter in a commission office, down-town; he was as industrious as he was ambitious, he wanted to be something more, and he knew that to rise, he must educate himself. So he worked with all his might when he had time. It was a slow task without a teacher. Besides, he had his share of the household work to do, which consisted of the sewing and mending of the family. John could sew like a sailor. A tailor might have smiled at some of his seams, but they were strong. John had not served a year on the bark *Curlew*, bound from New York to Havana and back, for nothing. He could use his hands more skillfully than any landlubber.

John was big and stalwart. A healthy,

honest fellow, with wide-open eyes that looked straight at the world.

Larry, who was washing his last pair of stockings, looked sleepy. He was a chubby boy, always with a tear in his clothes, no matter how diligently John might mend.

The room in which the boys cooked, talked, ate, and read, when they did read, had a neat square of bright carpet in the centre of the floor. It contained a big cooking stove, a table and several chairs. The walls were papered with pictures cut from illustrated papers. Their sleeping room was much smaller.

Their rooms were clean and warm—in contrast to those of many of their neighbors, where dirt and warmth seemed to be inseparable.

Ned opened the door and said—

"How d'ye do, boys!" and sank into a chair by the fire.

"I say," Larry said, "did you get 'The Bandit of the Pyrenees' from Tom Keefe. He said he'd lend it to us."

John raised his head from his book of Arithmetic.

"Look here, Larry, I told you you should not read books like that. And, Ned, I hope you will not encourage him to break my rule."

"Very well," Ned said, briefly.

"I guess you read them yourself when you were my age," Larry burst out. "If you hadn't read too many novels, you'd never have gone to sea."

"That is true, Larry," John answered, with that mixture of gentleness and firmness which had enabled him to control these hot-headed lads, "that is true. If I had minded wiser people, I would not have suffered as I did. I came home, after my last voyage in *The Curlew*, with a broken arm. For weeks I could get nothing to do, for nobody wanted to hire a boy who could use but one arm. I learned how foolish this reading of bad novels is."

"They're not bad," snapped Larry, who had let his iron stay so long in one place, that there was a warning smell of burning stocking. "I never saw a bad word in any of them. The good people always get the money, and kill the bad people in the end."

"You'd better stick to your Catechism, I say," answered John.

"I am not going to work all day and have no fun at all. I am fond of reading, and I like good, stirring novels."

"You had better study something useful."

"I want fun for awhile."

"I don't," put in Ned. "John is right.

Tom Keefe and I have been having fun, and I never felt so mean in my life."

John turned up the light and looked anxiously into Ned's face.

"No scrape I hope—and after Catechism class, too."

"That's the worst of it. Father Raymond told me to meditate on the duty of loving my neighbors as myself, and he said, too, that Italians and everybody were our neighbors, and then I went out, and I'll tell you what I did."

It was an admirable trait in the Smythes that they were entirely frank. They had no secrets from one another. They would tell unpleasant things and look for advice, sympathy, or even a scolding with complete indifference. John had taught them to be frank.

John shook his head gravely when Ned had finished

"It's too bad," he said.

Ned moved uneasily in his chair.

"I didn't think," he said.

"But you and Tom have hurt both Beppo and Guiseppe, just the same as if you had thought."

"I know that," said Ned.

"I'll drop in and see the Testas to-morrow night."

"Don't, John," said Larry, "they will put a stiletto into you."

"I see you have learned a great deal out of your novels, Larry. Now," continued John, "when mother was alive, she used to take an interest in the Italians that lived near us. She was just as poor as they were, but she knew how to be neat and clean, and make things comfortable. She and the Italians were great friends. She helped them all she could. 'They're Christians like us,' she was always saying, 'and we must show some Christian love for them.' And she did. She would send a bunch of our red geraniums to help take the chill of death off a little child, that lay in its coffin, or she'd send some other neighborly thing within her reach. And whenever there was a marriage or a christening, the Italians would always ask her to be present, and send in some sweetmeats for us children, or a bottle of wine. They were not a bad lot. And I think that if we really mean to profit by the lessons of the Catechism, we ought to put them in practice. To go and talk about love for one's neighbor, and then go to chase one's neighbor until his neck is nearly broken, is not a way of living honest and Christian-like."

"Preach on, preach ever," said Larry, yawning.

John's cheeks reddened.

"You ought to have more respect for John," said Ned. "Preaching or no preaching, he has kept a comfortable roof over our heads."

Larry only grinned. He loved John, but he did not like to show it.

Ned went to bed with a heavy heart. He did not fall asleep as usual. He thought about Beppo's misfortune, until his brain seemed to be nothing but confusion. And then Guiseppe's question about the apples worried him. What would Father Raymond say?

Ned had a miserable time, but at last he fell asleep.

John was not hard on the boys. He allowed them as much money as he could for themselves, so Ned and Larry had, unless the times were unusually hard, a little hoard of their own. Larry never had his long; but Ned added something every week to his little sum, which he kept in an old stocking tied under the bed. He had saved nearly six dollars. He had made many plans about this money. He thought of buying John a pair of heavy winter boots; of getting a little stand and beginning the cigar business, in connection with a chair and a box for blacking boots; of having a cutaway coat for Sunday, like those worn

by some of the more aristocratic boys in the block; and of playing an accordion.

This last thought had a sweetness all its own. Ned had often imagined himself in the act of pushing and dragging "Sweet Violets" from the instrument he loved. He felt, however, that he must give up even this beautiful dream. On the next morning, he went over to see Tom Keefe.

Tom was getting ready to go to work. But before starting, he had to wash the faces of his three little brothers, and help his mother to clear away the breakfast things. Tom lived with his father and mother on the third floor of a house in the block, not quite so crowded as the one in which Ned lived. His parents had three rooms, and they kept the place as snug and comfortable as they could.

It was impossible to avoid hearing the bad language of the evil people who lived in the house, and in the neighborhood; and it was no uncommon thing to meet a drunkard reeling upstairs. But Tom's father and mother did the best they could to keep their children pure. They sent the younger ones to the Brothers' school, and made the eldest—Tom—go regularly to Father Raymond's class. Every night after supper, all the family said the rosary, and on Sunday nights, Tom, who had a good voice, sang a hymn, assisted by the

whole family. Tom's father liked to have his family around him on Sunday nights. Sometimes the Smythes dropped in, and a concert was the order of the night. Tom's father and mother believed that the best way to keep him and his brothers out of the streets, was to make their home cheerful.

Tom's mother was tying up a package of luncheon for him, when Ned entered and said, "good morning."

Ned waited until the luncheon was ready and started out with Tom. Tom was an errand boy in an office, down-town.

"I came to ask you to go over to the Testas' with me."

Tom shook his head.

"Not at all—I don't want to go near them. They will not want to see us."

Ned pulled six silver dollars from his pocket.

"I am going to ask Beppo to buy a new violin with these."

Tom started in amazement.

"But how about the accordion?"

"I'll have to do without it, that's all. Will you come to the Testa's with me."

"All right!" said Tom.

They found Beppo and Nina seated on the

floor, trying to put the violin together. Nina had been crying, Beppo was still crying.

The visitors stood timidly on the threshold. Nina saw them, but her eyes flashed, and she turned her back to them. Filippo had slightly raised himself on his pillow. He watched the efforts of the children, and shook his head mournfully.

"No more music from that violin!" he said.

Ned walked up to the two and laid his six silver dollars on the floor, near the violin. Beppo started from his knees.

"What for?" he asked.

"To buy another fiddle—that's all," answered Ned, shamefacedly.

"Impossible," said Filippo, from the bed, "one could never buy a violin like that, with all the money one could earn. It was a treasure."

Ned sighed.

"Well," he said "I can't do any more than offer you all I have."

Nina pushed the money away from her.

"I would not take it, Beppo. I would starve first. These boys hate us!"

Ned took up his money.

"I see it is no use," he said. "I suppose I may as well buy an accordion, after all."

Beppo raised his head.

"Nina is wrong, I can see that you do not hate

us. But it needs much money—ah, so much money!—to buy a good violin." As Beppo said this, he seemed to sink into utter despair.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Tom. "Don't give up so easily. Never say die. Why can't you hire a fiddle. Old Altieri in the cellar has two. Give him fifty cents a week, or less, and he'll lend you one."

Beppo and Nina looked at each other in sudden hope.

"He speaks well," said Nina, looking favorably on Tom. "I did not think he had so much sense."

"Ah, yes," answered Beppo, "but we have not the fifty cents. Ah, no, we have not the money."

"There it is," said Ned, promptly, thrusting his six dollars in Beppo's hand.

"He will pay you back," said Nina, proudly. "As you do not really hate us, we will take your money; but we will pay you back. See, I will mark it down."

Nina lit a match, let it burn for a few seconds, and wrote something in Italian on the white wall, which was used very often for this kind of book-keeping.

"Now let's go," said Ned, afraid that Filippo or Beppo might thank him. He did not ex-

pect thanks from Nina. She seemed inclined to look on the transaction as a strictly business one.

"We shall pay you back," said Nina, proudly.

IV.

The news of the misfortunes of Guiseppe and Beppo spread through the block. And when Tom told his "crowd" how sorry Ned and he had been made, by the condition to which the Testas had been brought, the Italians were not molested. Father Raymond heard, too, of Ned's effort to repair the mischief he had done, and he spoke of it at the next Catechism class. Beppo Testa hired a violin and began business again. Father Raymond began to feel that his teaching was bearing fruit. He did not want his boys to have only a parrot-like acquaintance with the Christian Doctrine. He wanted them to show that they were Christians in their lives. It was vain, he thought, that the boys could tell him what the greatest of the commandments was, if the crop of broken heads, and the complaints of injury still increased in the block.

Father Raymond had succeeded in getting all the boys of the block to come to his class, except Larry Smythe. Even the two Schwatz boys,

ruddy, curly-headed little fellows, who spent all the money they could get at the theatre, came and were interested in Father Raymond's instructions and stories. The two Murphies and the three Malones were always in time, with clean faces and hands, which, at least, showed that an effort had been made to make them white.

The block was at peace, so far as the boys were concerned. Some of the grown-up people quarreled among themselves, but the boys earned admiration, even from the policeman of their district, by their careful conduct.

John Smythe was very uneasy. Larry had become unmanageable of late. He hurried through his work, and then pulled out a novel or a story paper and busied himself in it. He had acquired a habit of reading in the street; a story paper always stuck out of his pocket. He walked about as if in a dream. John could hardly get a word from him. When Ned asked whether he would have some bread one evening, he answered—

"Twenty scalps!"

He was thinking of some of the Indian fights he had been reading about. When John did not give him some household task to do after supper, he went out very silently and mysteriously.

Where he went John did not know. He tried to find out who his companions were. But Larry

would not tell. Father Raymond came and talked to him, but he was sullen and quiet. All John's threats and Father Raymond's persuasions, were not sufficient to get him to go to the Catechism class.

Finally, John ordered Larry to stay home at night. He obeyed for a time, and then stole from the house when John's back was turned. John threatened Larry with all the housework. He hated to wash dishes and to sweep and all the "girls' work," which he and his brothers were obliged to do. For awhile, after John had uttered this horrible threat, Larry came home regularly and did his part of the work.

John disliked household work very much, too. He was the most industrious of the young men in the employment of Wilmer & Co., which firm promised to advance him, as soon as he could advocate himself sufficiently. But he had little time for improvement. When he got home at night, he was very tired and there were many things that had to be looked after. Many a time, when Ned or Larry was particularly hard to manage, John was tempted to give up the effort to keep the little family together. Other people told him that he was sacrificing too much, for the sake of his brothers.

"You are losing your chances," these people

said to him, "your brothers will probably prove ungrateful."

But John answered that he knew all this. He felt that it was his duty to take care of his brothers. He said to himself that he had no right to think about any reward, even of gratitude, from them. He knew that by letting them shift for themselves, he would improve his position. He could go and board in some quiet house, and have all his evenings for study. Other poor boys, no older than Ned and Larry, were out in the world. They were very hard to manage. But John had learned his Catechism well. He knew the meaning of the question, "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

It was better that he should know that he was pleasing God, by giving up his own ease, than that he should choose to gain advancement, by leaving his brothers unprotected from the evil around them.

Larry could not or would not understand this. He imagined John restrained him, just because he did not want him and Ned to have any pleasure.

"John's too hard on us," he said to Ned. "He doesn't care for the theatre and that's why he doesn't like us to go. He likes to read old, dry school-books, and he wants us to like 'em, too. He's awfully dry. I say, Ned, Ted Malone

has a big pile of story papers and novels hid away somewhere. He lent me some. They're boss, I tell *you*."

"What have you been reading?" Ned asked.

"Oh, I have just finished 'The Bloody Avenger; or, Twelve On The Track of Death,' and I've another in my pocket, 'The Boy Gambler; or, The Scalp Hunter's Love.' Look at this picture,' Larry said, opening a worn and ragged paper, and showing a coarse cut of a small boy flourishing a revolver in each hand, and holding a dagger in his teeth, while two Indians lay dead near him, and he was kicking at a Chinese, whose hands were filled with playing cards.

"It's boss!" cried Larry. "Ted Malone says that you can buy revolvers like that, dirt cheap, and Henry Schwatz showed us a rifle his father had in the war. If you want to get scalps——"

"Father Raymond says that we ought not to read these things," answered Ned, "he says they hurt boys' minds."

"What does he know?" exclaimed Larry.

"They never hurt my mind. Why, Henry Schwatz has one hundred and ten, and he can tell you all about trappers in the west, and how many scalps a fellow could bring down in a week if——"

Larry turned suddenly. John had entered from the other room.

"Give me that paper!"

Larry stuffed it into his pocket.

John took hold of his arm.

"Give me that paper!"

Larry threw the paper at him.

"There—take it! It isn't mine. It's Ted Malone's. You're a mean curmudgeon to hurt a fellow's arm. Why don't you tackle a boy of your size?"

John walked over to the stove and thrust the paper into the fire.

Larry yelled and shook his fist at John.

"I'll make you pay for this," cried Larry, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself, to burn a fellow's paper that way. Approach me again," he continued, suddenly borrowing the language of some of his favorite authors, "and I'll brain you as you stand, perjured villain!"

Larry had not the least idea of what "perjured villain" meant. But he flung the phrase at his brother with all his might. In spite of his feeling of disgust, that Larry should behave so badly, John had to laugh at this grandiloquence. The laugh hurt Larry worse than hard words, particularly as Ned joined in it. Larry began to cry.

"You don't want us to have any fun at all. I'll run away, John, if you don't look out!"

"No, you will not," said John, "you'll just step into the other room."

Larry ran towards the street door. John caught him, pushed him into the room, and locked the door.

"You'll stay there," he said, firmly, until you promise to go to Father Raymond's Catechism class."

Ned generally stood by John in his struggles with Larry; but, in this case, he thought that John ought not to have burned Teddy Malone's paper.

"Can't Larry have any supper?"

"No he can't," said John.

"Well, I think it is rather hard on a fellow. What is the use of learning to read, if we can't read what we like!" grumbled Ned.

"Look here," answered John, helping his brother to several fried sausages, "if you liked to eat rat poison, do you think I'd let you do it. That kind of reading is no better than rat poison. See what it has done for Larry. It has made him disobedient, and careless, and lazy, and idle. He does not seem to have reverence for God or man. Last Sunday he was late for Mass, because he spent his time in reading one of his trashy stories. Now,

do you think that because a boy learns to eat, he ought to be let poison himself. *I* don't."

Ned made no answer. He finished his supper in silence.

Larry sang in a loud voice for some time, to show his indifference to John's punishment. After awhile, John finished his part of the household work and buried himself in his books. Ned finished his work and went to the Catechism class. He found that Ted Malone and Henry Schwatz were not there. Their brothers could give no account of them. Father Raymond was worried by their absence. The day of the First Communion was quite near.

"I am afraid bad reading is injuring these boys," Father Raymond said to Tom Keefe, "I hope you have given it up."

"I don't care for story papers at all now, answered Tom. "Father reads that book you gave us, "Fabiola," every night, and we don't have time to read anything else. I say, Father, if somebody would read stories to us fellows sometimes, we would not care so much for story papers."

Father Raymond said in his heart, that he wished parents would read good books to their children. It would save much sin and sorrow.

When Ned got home, he found John asleep

over his Arithmetic. He was sleepy himself, and he asked John for the key of the bed-room.

John awoke with a start.

"Oh, it's you, Ned," he said, "I thought it was Larry."

"Larry's locked in."

"Yes, I remember. Good-night. I want to finish all these examples in interest, before I go to bed."

"Good-night, John,"

Ned unlocked the door of the bed-room and entered.

"Larry," he said, softly.

No answer.

Ned struck a match. It flared up, and he saw that the bed was empty. He looked under the bed, lighting another match. Larry was not there, hiding, as he had done before, in order to alarm his brothers. In surprise, Ned lit the candle. No Larry. The window was wide open.

"He has gone!" Ned said. "Oh, dear, what will John say?"

His eye caught sight of a bit of folded paper on the table. He opened it. It was a scrawl done by Larry, with a red lead-pencil. It ran—

"BROTHERS,

"i rite to you in krimson ink which

is the color of blud, it means bisness, it means that i am on the war path, you have driven me fourth by your persecutions of a noble mind, that hungers to scour the vast perarie planes and cut the scalps from Injin murderers of our household gods Fairwell. Goodbye. i go with a band of trusty friends to make a career in the wild west. If the Murphys say i gave them that penknife with the three blades, you take it from them, i only lent it to them. Dont have any fooling, just take it from them—fairwell till death do us part.

"L. SMYTHE,
"TRAPPER."

Ned ran out into the other room with this note. John read it and turning it over saw a few more lines—

"i go with T. Malone and H. Schwatz. We have trusty revolvers. Do not follow us. Persoot will be vane. Again adoo!"

"Well, this *is* nice! I told you what bad reading would lead to. We may be thankful if these miserable boys haven't stolen anything."

"But, John, what shall we do!"

"Let me think—I might have known that Larry could easily get out on the fire escape, and climb down; but, I did not think he was bad enough to do it. Go over to the Schwatzes' and the Malones' and find out where the boys are."

Ned ran off at once.

Ted Malone and Henry Schwatz were missing. Ted had written with a red lead-pencil a few words on the back of a letter—

"I go with the Red-handed Avengers. Accept my blessing or my curse, as you will."

Ted's father laughed at this.

"I'll bless him," he said, "until he is black and blue."

And he went to the police station, to put the police on the track of the missing boys. Henry Schwatz's mother was in tears. Henry had gone; where, she did not know.

Ned was hurrying home, looking very pale and feeling very anxious, when he met Beppo Testa running along with his violin. Beppo had had a good day and he was whistling; instead of running away from Ned, as he would have done some weeks ago, he stopped, smiling in a friendly way.

"I can pay you back soon," he said. "I have made two dollars playing for some young people to dance."

"Never mind," answered Ned. "Nina's talk about paying was all nonsense. I've lost Larry—that is, Larry has run away."

"Run away?" echoed the Italian boy.

"Yes, and we don't know where he has gone."

Beppo looked concerned. Ned felt that it

was pleasant to have sympathy just at that moment, and he felt, too, how little he deserved it.

"Well," said Beppo, slowly, "I think I can help you. Wait."

He ran into his house and came out immediately with Guiseppe, having left his violin with Filippo and Nina.

Nina had heard him say, hurriedly, that Larry had run away.

"The American boys are all crazy," was Nina's satirical comment. Nina had a sharp tongue. It was her great fault.

Guiseppe seemed eager to help Ned.

"I saw your brother and Schwatz, and Malone, going down-town with some big bundles, to-night. I told Beppo about it. They were in South Fifth Avenue."

While they were talking, they were joined by old Altieri, who came up out of his cellar. Beppo explained the trouble to the old man, who could not speak any English.

Altieri asked several questions.

Beppo's face lighted up.

"Ah," he said, "Signor Altieri has seen your brother at the New York side of the Jersey City Ferry."

"At what time?" asked Ned.

Beppo repeated the question to Altieri.

"At nine o'clock," answered Altieri.

"I must tell John, at once."

"Will you let us go with you?" asked Beppo, hesitatingly. "We would like to help you and the good John."

Guiseppe shook his head in consent.

In the meantime, John had been asking questions. But nobody in the block had seen the boys. He began to be seriously alarmed. What if Larry, led away by his daily companionship with young—although imaginary—thieves and law-breakers, had followed their examples? What if he had fallen into the hands of the police. John, while he went from neighbor to neighbor, asking after the boys, prayed that this might not be.

He had returned to the house when Ned came in, followed by Guiseppe and Beppo.

Ned breathlessly told John that the boys had been seen. A few questions, answered by the boys, convinced John that Larry had been near the Courtlandt Street Ferry.

"We must go after them," he said. "Come, Ned—at once!"

Guiseppe ran home to tell his people that he was going with John. The delay seemed very long to John. At last they started. John could hardly restrain his impatience. They entered a horse car, and Beppo, who knew the driver, asked

him to go quickly. The man laughed, for just then a stout woman with a basket insisted on getting in. She took her time, and she had hardly gotten into her seat, when a large party coming out of a house, stopped the car. They said goodbye to each other many times. Then several children had to be lifted in, and half a dozen bundles. John thought the car would never move. He felt like getting out and pushing it with his shoulder.

At last the car started again. But every now and then somebody signalled it to stop.

"Let's get out and walk," John said.

"No," said Beppo, "we can not walk as fast as the car goes, in spite of the stops."

After a time—many hours it seemed to John—the boys reached Courtlandt Street. They crossed the ferry to Jersey City. Everything that was usually rapid in motion, seemed slow to-night. He thought that the ferry boat would never leave the slip. And when it did glide out into the river, it seemed almost stationary. It was going rapidly, but John's impatience outstripped it.

They reached Jersey City. It was dark; the Pennsylvania railroad station glowed with light; but the city, except for an occasional glimmer, seemed to be in gloom.

It was arranged that Ned and Beppo should go

into the station, to ask whether the boys had been seen by any of the railroad officials, while John and Guiseppe went into the city.

John applied to a policeman.

No; he had seen no boys like the ones described. But then he had been on this beat only since half-past nine o'clock. Another policeman was asked, with no more effect. In a few minutes, Ned and Beppo came back. They had heard nothing of the boys.

John began to believe that they were on the wrong track.

They stood opposite the station, near the hotel, in consultation. Beppo did not join in it. He was thinking.

He had noticed an Italian fruit-seller on the corner, as he came in. He proposed that John should ask him. John did.

Boys? He had seen many boys—many, many boys—he stretched out his hands to show how many boys he had seen—but not three boys of the kind described.

John turned away. But Guiseppe was not so easily baffled. He spoke to the man in Italian.

"*Altro*!" exclaimed the man. "I did not know you were Italian. I wish I had seen the boys, for your sake. What do you want them for?"

"They have run away from home."

"It is too bad. Tell me how they looked?"

Beppo described them again, in Italian.

"One might have had a rifle over his shoulder," he said, remembering that Henry Schwatz had probably carried his father's rifle.

"*Ecco*!" exclaimed the man. "I have seen the boys!"

Beppo rapidly translated the answer to John.

"Where? Where? Tell me where?" cried John.

The fruit-seller looked at him suspiciously. He asked Beppo whether his telling anything about the boys would cause him to be brought into court. "For," he said, "I could not afford to lose the time. I have no one to help me at the stand."

"I promise you there will be no trouble."

Then the Italian told them that the boys—three in number, one with a rifle—asked him the way to the woods. The boys had gone straight on. This had happened only an hour before. The Italian told them where a belt of woods was—he knew it well—he went there for chestnuts in the fall. He told them how to get there.

"It is rather cold for camping out," said Ned, shivering at the thought of such a thing. "I wouldn't like to try it."

John did not answer. In his eagerness, talk seemed a waste of time.

* * * * *

Ted Malone, Henry Schwatz, and Larry had walked rapidly through the streets, towards the belt of woods mentioned by the Italian. Schwatz had three blankets strapped to his back, a small revolver, in his pocket, half a dollar, and his father's rifle on his shoulder; Ted Malone had a knife—a table knife well sharpened—a loaf of bread tied up in a handkerchief, and two dollars. Larry had no weapon; but he had a thermometer, while the other boys looked on with much respect, four dollars, and a few odds and ends, broken buttons, a hand-glass, &c., to be used in trading with those Indians, who should be courageous enough to resist these mighty hunters.

They had tramped along some distance, when Larry, who felt quite rich, proposed to have something to eat. They entered a restaurant, and Larry paid for oysters and cigarettes, "like a little man," as the other boys said. A half-hour was used up in this way. After this, they did not hurry. They felt in better spirits and loitered, looking into all the windows.

A large grocery store, brilliantly lighted attracted them.

"We shall need some provisions," said Henry Schwatz, looking through the large pane of plate glass. "We ought to buy some. This is a good place."

The store was empty, apparently; but behind the counter, in a corner, the proprietor of it sat dozing over a newspaper. He had sent his clerk off early and he was about to close the store for the night.

"There's a lovely h ım," said Ted Malone. "I wish we had that. It wouldn't be hard to carry and we could broil part of it for breakfast, you know."

Schwatz, who was of a prudent turn, counted his money and remarked that when they killed a deer or two, they would have meat enough. Still, the ham had attractions for Ted Malone.

"Don't you remember," he said, as he pressed his nose against the glass, "how Red-headed Bob fooled the grocer out of half a cow in 'The Belle Of The Prairies.' Bob went in, you know, and, while the grocer wasn't looking, he hooked the beef and was off like a flash."

"But that was stealing," said Henry Schwatz.

"All's fair in war, boys: now I say why shouldn't we get that ham, just as Bob did the beef, hey?"

Ted tried to speak in a jolly way, but he was forced to avert his eyes from the others.

"We've got to live on the world, you know, and we may as well begin at once," he went on. "Don't be fools—Schwatz stole his father's rifle, and you, Larry, have a dollar in your pocket that belonged to John."

Larry reddened and hung his head.

"Let's toss up," continued Ted, taking a cent from his pocket. "Head, you hook the ham; tail, I do it."

"But it would be stealing," said Schwatz. "I'll not do it."

"Nobody asked you," said Ted Malone, with a sneer. "You haven't got heart enough for it. But Larry has; and I have. Who's afraid? There's nobody in the store."

The man behind the counter had heard the whispers of the boys. He could not make out what they said; but he seen they were plotting some mischief. He leaned back until the two piles of starch boxes between which he sat hid him entirely from view.

Larry's good angel whispered to him. He hesitated between the angel's whisper and Ted's sneer. He had read many times of how the smart-boy in the story papers had outwitted store-keepers, and appropriated their goods. He had laughed

over their tricks, until he came to believe that stealing was not so bad after all. But his conscience awoke when the temptation was placed so boldly in his way.

Ted Malone threw up the cent, giving it an adroit twist.

"Head!"

Larry moved uneasily from the window.

"I tell you what," Ted said, having taken another look at the inside of the shop. "Why shouldn't you take a handful of the cash out of the drawer. It would come in mighty well, while we're traveling. You bet!"

Larry turned away his head.

"It will be easy enough. Schwatz and I will stand here and give the signal if anybody comes. Now, go in; be a man."

Ted Malone was twice as big as Larry. He was something of a bully, too, as the boys in the block well knew. He imitated as far as he could his favorite heroes, and knocked down any other boy who defied him.

"I can't!" said Larry. "It would be wrong—it would break John's heart."

"You're a coward," cried Ted, shaking his fist in Larry's face. "Do you think I'm going to let you spoil everything. Go in, I say!"

Larry hesitated. He had great respect for

Ted Malone's superiority. He hated to have Ted think he was a coward. But he remembered the words of the commandment—"Thou shalt not steal!"

"He's afraid!" sneered Ted Malone, angrily. "You weren't afraid to take John's dollar."

"He said I might have to buy a hat with it," answered Larry, "and I'll buy one, or give him back the money."

"You will, will you?" exclaimed Ted, as his fist fell on Larry's head. He raised his hand again to give another blow, when suddenly he was knocked over; and Beppo, with flashing eyes, arose out of the darkness. His sharp eyes had seen the group of boys at the window. John and the others had turned down another street, but Beppo had kept on, in spite of their opposition to turning into a street which seemed so quiet.

Beppo had crept softly up to the boys and heard their dialogue. His heart beat very fast when he saw that Larry was about to yield. He was afraid that the boys might run away, if they discovered him. He hoped that John and the others might come; but they did not; so he was obliged to do what he could. It was very effective.

"Beppo!" Larry exclaimed.

Ted Malone picked himself up and looked sullenly at Beppo.

"I owe one," he said "and I'll give it to you, if you don't join our band."

Beppo's eyes flashed.

"I will not join a band of thieves."

Ted shook his fist; but Beppo's lesson had been severe enough to prevent him from doing anything more.

"I am glad you come, Beppo," Larry said. "I am sorry I got into this. I'd go back, if I thought John would forgive me. I don't want to join a band of thieves either."

"John!" cried Beppo. "John! John! John!"

Ted Molone took to his heels.

John came, running. Larry threw himself into his big brother's arm and began to cry.

"I'll never read another story paper," he sobbed. And he kept his promise.

* * * * *

Ted Malone wandered about the country all night. In the morning, in trying to steal a ride on a passing train, he had his foot crushed so badly that it had to be cut off. He never speaks of that awful night of terror. He did not make his First Communion with the other boys, although Larry did.

Father Raymond says, with just pride, that there are no better-behaved boys in New York than the boys in the block. He now teaches the Catechism of Perseverance to the larger boys, and so well have they learned the meaning of Charity, that there is very seldom a fight among them. They are all growing prosperous, because they are all industrious and they all help one another. Often Beppo and Guiseppe come to John's house for a little fun.

John has been promoted, and though he still keeps house, Father Raymond gives him a lesson in Arithmetic twice a week. He is happy, as he deserves to be in the fact that his two "boys" are trying to do their duty.

THE HOUSE THAT JOHN BUILT.

I.

WHEN Johnny O'Neill was a little boy, his father gave him, on Christmas morning, a chest of tools. Johnny felt very happy when he saw the shining steel and new wood of the chisels, plane, and all the other instruments which a big, grown-up carpenter uses at his trade.

But Johnny soon became tired of looking at his chest and its beautiful contents. He wanted to get to work. His mother would not have shavings in the parlor. The weather was very cold, and he could not work in the open air. Sarah, the servant, scolded when he took his tools into the kitchen. And so the ambitious young carpenter was made almost as unhappy, by the obstacles thrown in his way, as he had been happy at the sight of the tools, *all his own.*

Johnny's father saw that Johnny wanted something more; but, being a very busy man, he did not think of asking what he wanted.

"You cannot clutter up my kitchen with your trash," said old Sarah. "No, you can't have

the kitchen table when I'm not using it. I'm always using it. Don't bother me any more."

"Now, Johnny," said his mother, "you must not play with your tools either in the parlor or the sitting-room. You might cut the furniture, and I can't have shavings on the carpet."

Poor Johnny wondered why there was so much room in the house for furniture and carpets, and so little for a boy with a box of tools.

"Father gave them to me," he said "and I think I ought to use them somewhere."

"I wish father had never given them to you!" replied his mother.

Johnny felt like crying. It seemed rather hard to him. If his mother would only let him take the sitting-room carpet up, he was sure he could put it down again before evening came. But she would not. And there was the parlor! Of what use was the parlor? It was always cold in there; nobody went into it except on Sunday, and when "company" came. His mother might let him have the parlor for a work-shop. Nobody else seemed to want it.

Johnny did not go to school. The Catholic school, taught by the brothers, was too far away. His mother taught him in the morning. The afternoon he had all to himself. The afternoons had been very dreary, since he had received the

chest of tools. He could only look at them, and try their edges on pieces of kindling wood.

The man who owned the place across the road went to work to put up a rough shed, in which to store potatoes, as his cellar had become damp. Johnny watched him eagerly. How he would have liked to help him! But, when he climed over the hillocks of hard snow, which lay between him and the farm across the road, and offered his services, the man laughed, and told him he was too small.

Johnny, in spite of this rebuff, watched and admired him at his work. The man concluded to make a little house instead of a shed. He nailed up four boarded sides and cut a window, into which he put an old sash. When it was finished, Johnny thought that it was one of the most beautiful pieces of work he had ever seen.

Why could not he build one like it? He had the tools. He had observed closely the manner in which the man had used his. There was no place for his tools in his father's house; he felt that he ought to build a work-shop of his own.

There came a sudden spell of very cold weather, about the first of February. Johnny was kept in the house a great deal just then, because his mother said he was "delicate," and that he might catch cold He thought and

thought over the project of building a house for himself. He dreamed of his house. One night he dreamed that he had built his house behind the barn; that it had two windows, a door, and a wooden step; and that suddnly fire broke out in his father's house. The fire consumed everything; his father and mother were homeless! Then Johnny said—

"Come to my house, dear father and mother."

"Your house! you haven't any house."

Then Johnny (in his dream) led the way to the little house behind the barn, and made a fire in the grate, and his father and mother kissed him, and said—

"Oh, how sorry we are that we didn't let you play in the parlor!"

Johnny awoke, and resolved to buy some boards. He had seventy-five cents in his bank. That sum, he thought, was more than sufficient to buy all the boards he wanted.

March came with some fine days. On one of these, Johnny, having obtained permission from his mother, went across the road to negotiate for timber.

II.

The man across the way was putting a new handle to a shovel. He asked after Johnny's father. Johnny was much struck by a hen-coop with a little steeple on it.

"Did you make that?" he said, admiringly.

"Oh, yes," said the man. "Hadn't anything better to do. I'm fond of architecture."

Johnny thought how happy he would be if he could make a hen-coop like that. Then he spoke of his business. He wanted to buy enough of lumber to put up a little house, in which he could work with his tools.

"For, you know," he said, "mother doesn't like shavings on the parlor carpet."

"Women folk *are* particular," said the man, pulling his sandy whiskers. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll put up a carpenter's shop for you for two dollars a day and find the boards."

Johnny's countenance fell. And the man continued—

"I'm not much of a carpenter, but I can do that. I wish we had a good carpenter down in these diggings. He'd find plenty to do."

Two dollars a day! Where could Johnny get that fabulous sum?

"I'll come some other time," he said. "Good-bye!"

"Good-bye. Think about it, and let me know."

Johnny did think about it a great deal; but thinking did not increase his seventy-five cents to the amount demanded, by the man across the road.

About this time, Johnny began to prepare to receive the Holy Eucharist. He was taken to the church three times every week; it was seven miles away. Finally he made his First Communion; and, having been well instructed by his father, his mother, and Father Freno, he made it very fervently. For some weeks his anxiety about the carpenter's shop disappeared. He was very happy.

Johnny's father resolved that, so soon as the Great Day was past, he would mark the event by a favor to his son. He asked Johnny what he wanted.

"A carpenter's shop," Johnny said, seriously.

His father laughed.

"Why, Johnny!"

"Yes, father, I want to learn to work, and I can't work in the house without spoiling everything. I want to be a carpenter."

"My dear Johnny," said his father, "I intend that you shall be a lawyer, like Mr. Squibbs, who goes by every morning on the fine gray horse,

with a green bag on his arm. Study hard, Johnny. Ask for something else."

"But I want that most of all."

Johnny's mother lifted her head from her work-basket.

"Did you take my scissors, Johnny? No, here they are. I don't approve of Johnny's cutting his fingers all to pieces in a carpenter's shop He shall go to college by and by and become a great lawyer. Perhaps he may be President some day."

Johnny, unlike most boys now-a-days, had been taught to be very respectful to his father and mother. He was silent.

"Do you hear that, Johnny?" asked his father. "Or you may go into town every day, like your father, and have a real estate office."

"I want to use my hands," said Johnny. "They're no good to me now, except to play ball with in the summer. Suppose mother were to become an orphan—no, I mean a widow—what could I do for her?"

His father and mother both laughed. It was funny to see a small boy gravely considering such an important subject.

At this moment there was a knock at the door, and Mrs. Angelica Smythe, a neighbor and friend of the O'Neills, entered. She was said to

have very elegant manners; she smiled a great deal, and astonished the country people around her by the grandeur of the millinery she had, from New York.

Mrs. O'Neill told her, with a smile, the subject of the conversation.

"Dear me!" cried Mrs. Smythe, with a smile that took in the whole party, it was so very wide. "The boy has extremely low tastes. I intend my Augustus and Reginald for professions. Their father is only a farmer, but I hope that Augustus and Reginald will aim at something much higher. Matilda practices six hours a day at the piano-forte. When your Mary gets old enough, I would—if I were you—have her do the same."

Mary was just two years old. Mrs. O'Neill laughed.

"Mary will have to learn to be a good housewife."

"Nonsense," exclaimed Mrs. Smythe. "I can't see where your Johnny got such low tastes. A carpenter!—a mere mechanic! Dear me!"

"St. Joseph was a carpenter," said Johnny, getting red in the face. "I don't want to be a better man than St. Joseph."

There was a pause. Mrs. Smythe tossed her head until the beads on her bonnet rattled.

"You shall have your carpenter's shop," said Mr. O'Neill, after a thoughtful pause.

"He'll cut his hands!" cried Johnny's mother.

"It would be better that he should cut his right hand off," answered Mr. O'Neill, gravely, "than that he should grow up with idle or useless hands."

"This comes of marrying an Irishman, Mrs. O'Neill," said Mrs. Smythe. "They have such low tastes!"

Mr. O'Neill laughed; and Johnny laughed, too. Why not? Was he not to have his own little house?

Sarah, the servant girl, and all the neighbors said that Mr. O'Neill was very foolish, to indulge Johnny in his taste for carpentering; and when he actually paid the man across the road two dollars a day, for a week's work on Johnny's shop, even Mrs. O'Neill shook her head. But Johnny was contented; he helped to build the house.

Smytheville was a very "genteel" place. There were only about twenty houses in the place, scattered through big and little farms. There was a railroad station of a fantastic pattern, and all the houses in Smytheville had, in imitation of the railroad station, been decorated with ornaments of fantastic kinds. The people, except the man across the road, had hired men to work for

them. There was a "select" school where a great many useless things were taught.

Mrs. O'Neill, like most mothers in Smytheville, had ambitious dreams for her son. She was engaged in economizing, that, after a time, he might be sent away to college.

He already knew his declension of Latin nouns, and had even begun to conjugate "Amo." But the young Smythes were studying Greek, Latin, Geometry, Trigonometry, German, French, Mental Philosophy, Rhetoric, Physiology, and other things too numerous to mention.

III.

Time passed. Johnny had three maxims pasted up in his work-shop.

Father Freno had given him this—

"Remember the presence of God and imitate St. Joseph."

His father this—

"Do everything as well as you can."

His mother this—

"Speak kindly."

Father Freno said that the two latter were contained in his, for St. Joseph did even the smallest thing for the glory of God, and never spoke an unkind word.

Johnny, having these maxims before him every day—he had written them in large red letters and pasted them upon his bench—did his best to put them in practice. He began by driving every nail carefully. "Thoroughness" was his motto. The Smythes and the other boys occasionally dropped in to see him at work. But, as Johnny did not read the flash story papers, and as he made them work when they came, their visits became less frequent. The aristocratic Smythes said he had the tastes of a mechanic, and then Sarah, whose tongue was rather sharp, told them—

"They'd better go to work on the farm and help their father, instead of 'loafing' about and smoking cigarettes."

Johnny—or rather, John, as he liked to be called now—sometimes went to visit his cousin Frank, in town. Frank thought of nothing but theatres and novels and clothes. He had a drawerful of neckties of all colors. "Just like a girl," Johnny said, with some disdain. "He says, too, he doesn't intend to kill himself with work so long as his 'governor' lives, and wonders why I should potter about my trade, when I have a rich father. Is father rich, mother?"

"No, indeed," said his mother. "But I think he and I together, will be able to send you to college next year."

"Thank you, mother," John said.

He was fond of books. But, being a boy of common-sense, he had already seen that much misery comes because people do not learn to earn their living—because they spend all the money they have for oranges and almonds, and have nothing left to pay for the solid parts of their dinner.

John's mother had never become quite reconciled to the carpenter's shop, until he made her a pretty cabinet of ebonized wood, nicely carved, for John had added wood-carving to his other accomplishments. Then he had done so many odd jobs so neatly, that she began to feel that it was not such an evil, after all, to have a son with mechanical tastes.

John had read all the books he could get, on wood-carving, and he was becoming an adept. He had just put the finishing touches to a hat-rack, intended as a Christmas gift to his father, when that dear, good father died. It was very sudden. Mr. O'Neill went from home early in the morning; he was brought home dead at noon. He had kept himself prepared for death. This was the greatest consolation to his beloved ones. He had received the Body and Blood of Our Lord on the Sunday before he died.

IV.

Mr. O'Neill's business affairs were found to be in a complicated condition. He had worked hard; but Smytheville and the neighboring town together, did not give him a great deal to do. He had lived up to his income. This had not troubled him, because, being a healthy man, he had expected to live many years to come.

The truth was that, when Mr. O'Neill's debts were paid, there was little left, except the furniture of the house in which his family lived.

They had three months in which "to look around them." After that, the house and lot would pass to strangers. Mrs. O'Neill had still the little sum in bank, intended for John's course in College. That, of course, must be given up now. This thought cost Mrs. O'Neill many bitter tears.

John thought a great deal and prayed a great deal. Nobody knew about the latter, though; he didn't wear his heart on his sleeve "for daws to peck at."

There was the sum of five hundred dollars in bank. How was this to be made to help his mother and Mary along in the world?

The Smythes had a two-acre lot for sale. They wanted two hundred dollars for it. John said to himself, "I will buy it and build a house.

Stone is cheap around here, and I can get all the wood I want for very little money."

Mrs O'Neill would not consider this at first. John build a house. Ridiculous! Little Mary thought it funny, too. At last, however, when John showed that they must be without a house, if he did not build it, Mrs. O'Neill consented.

All Smytheville thought John crazy, when he went to work himself one spring day, with the man across the road, to build his house.

The Smythe boys told everybody how much they despised a boy, who liked to work as if he were a "foreigner," instead of "going in" for more suitable pursuits. They dropped him out of the Smytheville Base-ball club, and when he went to the meeting of the singing-school, the Smythe girls declared that they didn't want "laborers and mechanics" coming there. Others, led by the Smythes, did similar things. The O'Neills were soon left alone. John did not care for this. At night he studied, when he was not too tired, or read aloud to his mother and Mary.

In July, John had very hard, rough hands and thick muscles; the man across the road had some money in his pocket, and Mrs. O'Neill had a pretty dark-stone house, two-story high, "pointed" with white mortar. John had been very careful with the mortar, and had made it fresh every day; so his house was well put together.

The wood-work in the interior was unlike ordinary wood-work. John had driven every nail with care and love. It had taken him six months, instead of three, to build his house; he had done several jobs of carpentry for the neighbors, and put together a cabinet for an old friend of his father in the town. His jobs had brought him nearly eighty dollars. In the meantime, Mrs. O'Neill and Mary "boarded" with the family that had taken their old house.

V.

John's mother was pleased with the new house. "It had so many closets," she said. There was a little sideboard in the dining-room, and a dumb-waiter, worked by an ingeniously constructed pulley, that lifted dishes from the kitchen. These and other improvements soon attracted the curious neighbors. The Smytheville houses, although ornamental without, were not particularly comfortable within; so John's labor-saving devices were soon noised abroad. His was a little house, built with many fears and in the face of obstacles that would have discouraged anybody who was not "thorough," and who was inclined to think of his own ease or comfort.

The house that John O'Neill built was even noticed in the town newspapers. It was much for a boy of seventeen to have done. It did not seem much to him.

At last, his mother and sister had a home.

The first night they spent there was a happy one. Father Freno came over and blessed the house. They had a nice little tea-party, and Mrs. O'Neill's waffles added life to the occasion.

"And now I must work hard," said John to the priest. "If anybody wants a box or a barn built in this county, I'm your boy, Father."

Mr. Smythe put John to work at mending his fences. He had not time to do it himself, and he did not dare to ask his boys to do it. John went about it cheerfully, and did it well. Just at this time, Augustus and Reginald Smythe were lounging about the farm, having been graduated from the "select" school. Their father had no money with which to pay for them at college. They were on his hands.

"I don't know," he said with a sigh, "whether education amounts to much, if there is no 'grit' with it. That O'Neill boy works like a bee."

"He has low tastes," answered Mrs. Smythe, helping her husband to a slice of roast beef. "Your boys are gentlemen. I'm so tired of getting up these big dinners for the farm hands, I think we'll have to get another servant."

"I can't pay my debts now," said Mr. Smythe, with a worried look. "Matilda ought to help you."

"Matilda!" cried Mrs. Smythe, dropping the carving knife. "Matilda must practice, and she has painted a volcano in action, which is beautiful—beautiful!"

Mr. Smythe groaned.

"If I should die, what would you do? The boys couldn't look after you, as that O'Neill boy has done."

"Don't compare *us* with John O'Neill," said Reginald Smythe. "Mother, I wish you wouldn't be so vulgar as to offer me soup twice. It's not good form, you know."

"Dear me!" said the mother. "I'll remember that next time."

"I hear that lawyer Squibbs has hired young O'Neill to make all the frames, doors, and windows for his new house. That ought to bring him five hundred dollars," said Mr. Smythe.

"Let the carpenter stick to his plane," sneered Augustus Smythe.

VI.

It is spring time. The honeysuckles cluster around the house that John built. Ten years have

passed, and Mrs. O'Neill, with many more wrinkles in her face, but looking calm and placid, sits on the porch. Mary has brought her a cup of tea and some rolls. Mary is a sweet, gentle-looking girl, who looks very pretty as the sunset color touches her usually pale cheek.

Mrs. O'Neill and Mary are very contented. John has left them; but, strange as it may seem, they are glad that he has gone; for every week there comes a letter from the seminary, in which he is studying to become a priest. The dream of Mrs. O'Neill's life will soon come true—the answer to the prayer of her later years will soon be granted. On the day of John's ordination, there will be no happier woman in Christendom than John's mother.

The house that John built is hers, the little farm at the back of it is hers, too, bought through John's industry; and there is a snug sum in bank to her credit.

The Smythes disappeared five years ago. Mr. Smythe could not stand the strain of hard work, and he sold the farm. His sons went to the nearest city, where they have joined that large class, the "genteel" lounger, who are afraid to steal, who will neither beg nor do any manual labor.

So we say "good-bye" to the happy mother and sister, that sit in the house that John built!

A CHILD OF THE FLOODS.

I.

HELENA came to Cincinnati with her grandmother, in the month of December of last year. Her grandmother loved Helena so much, that Helena loved her grandmother almost as well as her mother.

Six years ago Helena's father and mother came to Cincinnati, bringing with them their other three children. But the old grandmother—Frau Ida, pronounced in the German way "eeda"—would not let her dear grandchild leave her; so rather than leave the good grandmother sad and lonely, Helena was left behind with her.

It was a sad time for the poor German people in the province where Frau Ida and her little granddaughter lived—a sad, sad time. Prince Bismark and his followers had exiled many of their priests, and deprived others of their churches. There was no Mass, there were no Sacraments for the people of the village. But Frau Ida's house

and plot of ground were there, and hoping for better times, she stayed there, too.

Every month she went to a big city, many miles away, where she could hear Mass, and her little charge went with her. But this could not always be, the distance was very great and often the weather was bad.

Helena, however, made her First Communion; and young as she was, the persecutions to which she saw religion subjected, made her love it more and long to die for it. Like the old pagan Romans who were proud to say, "We are Roman citizens," Helena felt her face flush when she said—

"I am a Catholic."

It seemed to Frau Ida that the good times when the priests would come back, and the church bells ring out again, and the crowds kneel at Benediction, were very far off, long as she had waited for them; so one day she said to Helena—

"Wouldst thou like to go to America, thou dear child?"

They were in the kitchen — the dear old kitchen that Helena loved so much. Frau Ida sat in her carved arm-chair. She was knitting, and the kitten was hiding behind the stove waiting for her to drop her ball of yarn. The hands of the clock in the wall pointed to three. Frau Ida had just drunk her usual cup of coffee; all

was quiet and peaceful. Helena could scarcely believe that her grandmother had asked her this question. Go to America—far, far away from the dear Fatherland. It was almost too much for her to grasp. She threw her arms around her grandmother and kissed her. The ball of worsted fell upon the floor, and the kitten was happy.

"Must I leave thee, grandmother?"

"No, no, my child," said Frau Ida; "I will go with thee."

Helena put her face close to her grandmother's and whispered—

"I am afraid of the Indians and the buffaloes, grandmother."

Frau Ida smiled.

"Thy father wrote to me that the cities in America are larger than our village, and that he has never seen an Indian in Cincinnati. There are churches there, wherein the Holy Mass is said, and many good priests. It is a beautiful country." And Frau Ida began to sing in her sweet, low voice—

"Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen bluhn?"
(Know'st thou the land where the lemons bloom?)

Helena joined in, for singing was with her and her grandmother a second language.

"Ach, it is a beautiful country! Thou shalt see oranges and lemons in the streets and won-

drous trees, and the golden sun all day long, and no rain. It is a strange land, too. The house-wives do not work in the fields or drive the cattle, but sit in their cottages and sew with their feet!"

"Have they no hands, grandmother?"

"I do not know," answered Frau Ida, picking up the ball of yarn. "Thy father did not say. They have curious machines which help them to sew faster than I—when I was young—could sew with my hands."

Helena's eyes became round as saucers.

"But we shall see father and mother?"

"Yes, yes, beloved child."

At this moment Herr Wilhelm, the chapel-master, who was to buy Frau Ida's cottage, entered and Helena ran upstairs to think about this beautiful new country, and to pray in her oratory.

II.

Frau Ida and Helena had a pleasant voyage. Helena's father met them at Castle Garden.

There, among the crowd of immigrants rushing forwards and backwards, he found them keeping guard over their trunks and bundles. Several steamers had come in that week. Groups of men in long coats and queer caps were smoking pipes,

and lounging on the benches around the enormous building. Women and babies were quite numerous. Some of the people were chatting and laughing, others looked very anxious, as if they were looking for friends. It was warm inside, but the smells of the place made Helena think that America was not such a sweet country after all. It was about noon, and everybody seemed hungry. There was a large group gathered around the refreshment stand, where busy clerks sold sausages, sandwiches, pies, beer and other things much relished by the immigrants after their long sea-voyage.

Frau Ida, tightly clasping Helena's hand, eagerly watched each passer-by. Perhaps her dear Casper should miss her! While she was waiting, she noticed a young woman with a child in her arms—a pale, thin woman, very anxious looking and weary. Helena had been looking at her, too. Her eyes seemed glued to the door through which friends or relatives were hurrying into the place. The little child in her arms seemed tired. It had pretty blue eyes, with long lashes, and short yellow hair.

Helena asked her grandmother if she might speak to the baby. Having gotten permission, she kissed the little girl. The mother smiled, and said in German—

"God bless thee, child. I have waited three days for my husband, but he has not yet come. Oh, I pray that he is not dead!"

Helena poured out some milk she had bought, and offered to the little one, who drank it.

"She is hungry!" cried Helena. "Dear little angel!" And she at once began to fill the child's mouth with sausage.

Frau Ida interfered "Thou wilt kill the child, Helena. Thou hadst better feed the mother, who, no doubt is hungry." The mother *was* hungry, and in the pleasure of filling her lunch-basket and trying to make her comfortable, Frau Ida and Helena forgot their own anxiety.

They found that the best way to lighten their own care, was to take on themselves the sorrow of this poor woman. They had succeeded in making a bed for the baby on a bench, near a big stove, when two arms were thrown around Frau Ida. She turned quickly. It was Casper, her son. He was a big, strong man, with a heavy beard and a kindly smile. Soon it was Helena's turn to be buried in that beard and overcoat.

She scarcely remembered her father; but she knew that this man was he. He looked so good, so kind!

The poor mother, with the child, burst into tears as she saw their joy.

"It is well—it is well!" she said. "But I wish that my beloved Hans was here. I have waited and watched for him, every hour for three days. I could not eat, I could not drink, I could only watch."

Helena's father asked her husband's name.

"Hans Schwartz," from Bavaria; he lived in Illinois. She had lost the name of the place. He was a farmer.

Casper made all the inquiries he could. For he spoke English remarkably well; but nobody knew anything of Hans Schwartz; so the happy three had to leave the poor woman and her baby.

Frau Ida, who was very careful and seldom gave much away, left her a warm shawl, and Helena slid a package of oranges and bananas, her father had given her, into the woman's basket. It was a sacrifice for Helena. She had never seen a banana before, and had never eaten an orange. They were very frugal people in the village where she lived, and such luxuries were only for the rich merchants in the cities.

Frau Ida and Helena were made almost speechless by the succession of wonders that met their view. Imagine the amazement with which they saw railroads running over the heads of the people, tall buildings, and the hurrying crowds on Broadway!

But by the time they reached Cincinnati, they were weary of surprises.

At the railroad station Helena's mother waited, with a beating heart, for the dear little girl. Over and over again she had asked herself, "Would the time ever pass? Would the moment ever come, when she could clasp Helena to her heart?" Her three boys were there, too, waiting to meet their sister. When the train came in, what a happy group they were!

III.

Helena's father had bought a plot of ground near the river. He was very well content with the profit it yielded him. Accustomed in his native country—where land is dear—to make, by constant industry, every inch of earth bear something useful, he farmed his small lot as if it were a garden. He raised vegetables and took them to market himself. His neighbors were astonished at the prices he got for his potatoes, cabbages, and tomatoes.

"How do you do it?" they often asked.

"Hard work and care do it," he would answer, with a laugh.

Every Sunday and on the first Friday of

every month, the family were seen at early Mass. And Casper never went to bed without saying the rosary, in the presence of his wife and children. The boys were as hard-working as their father. Casper always said that the reason he saved money was because his boys worked for him, while the sons of neighbors went into the city to seek places in offices.

Casper's house was comfortable and warm and clean. Helena was permitted to put her statue of the Blessed Virgin in a niche in the room prepared for her, and to surround it with candles and flowers.

Helena was treated like a little lady for the first week. Then she went to work, and she found plenty to do. There were chickens to feed, potatoes to be washed—for Casper always sent his vegetables to market nicely cleaned and arranged in neat baskets—many things to be done. Helena was just the little maid to do all this. While her grandmother knitted endless stockings, sometimes sighing a little for the old home, Helena bustled about like a happy bee.

All went well. Casper built a big green-house, and his grapes were beautiful to behold. At Christmas Casper thinned them out somewhat, and so pleased was he with the amount he received for them, that he built more green-houses

and spent all the money he had saved, in stocking them with rare varieties of grapes. The greenhouses were delightful in the winter days. Leaves and tendrils hid the frosty landscape without from view.

Casper said that Frau Ida and Helena brought him good luck. And Frau Ida always replied that whatever God sends is good.

February came. Constant rain fell. Heavy mists veiled the earth. The sunsets presaged damp weather. Gleams of sunshine were once or twice reflected in the clouds; but they seemed to be rapidly quenched by the mist and rain.

The river began to rise; Casper laughed at the neighbors who said that if the rains continued, there would be a flood. Things had gone so well with him that he feared no evil. He smoked his pipe and went about his work as good-humoredly as usual. Frau Ida put on her spectacles, looked at the falling rain and misty river, and shook her head.

"We have no floods at home," she said, "when the snow melts under late winter rain, because we have the forests; but where are your forests?"

For the first time Casper looked seriously at the river. It had risen much; there was no doubt of that. Farmer Brown dropped in to

tell him that there was great alarm in the city, and that many people had deserted their houses and gone to higher ground. If the rain kept up, he said, there would be awful times, for the flood would be worse than even last year's.

The last year's flood had not hurt Casper, so he was still indifferent. But that night, sitting beside his hearth and smoking his pipe, he was more silent than usual. The rain fell drip, drip, drip on the roof. The river's flow made an ominous and unusual sound. What if the flood should rise? Casper knew that if it once reached the level of the terrace on which his lot was situated it would cover all he possessed. He thought of the heavy bunches of grapes in the green-house for which an owner of one of the city hotels had promised to pay him a snug sum. Suppose the flood should come and the result of his labor be swept away.

Frau Ida read her son's thoughts.

"What God sends," she said, "is well sent, my son."

Casper tried to say the rosary with a tranquil mind.

The next day dawned through mist and rain. The water still continued to rise. Boats began to move over farms, and here and there a chimney, a telegraph pole, or the top of a high tree show-

ing above the water, bore testimony that the river had swept far beyond its banks. The family gathered together their household goods. To-morrow, if the rain did not cease, they would move to higher ground, and take lodging with Farmer Brown.

That night was an anxious one. But Casper's family were all too industrious during the day to keep awake long at night. About twelve o'clock there was a loud crash against the walls of the house. And then the glass of Frau Ida's window was broken violently.

"If you don't want to be drowned in your beds," said Farmer Brown, "come out at once."

Farmer Brown sat in a boat about a foot below the sill of the window of the second story. He held a lantern high above his head.

"You'll have to come quick, too," he cried, "for the floating timber will dash me to pieces if I stay here."

Another crash. A huge tree, torn up by the flood, had struck the corner of the house. Casper and his sons dressed hastily. The women of the family had not changed their clothes. They quickly seized such bundles of necessary articles as they could get, and then they were helped into the boat. It almost broke Frau Ida's heart to have to leave her old carved chest in the house, but of course Farmer Brown would not take it.

The scene, with the house and green-house half buried in the flood, was a strange one. It was dark, but here and there, from passing floats, flashed lights. A dull roar broke the quiet of the night. To step into the boat from the window required unusual courage on the part of Helena. All was dark below her. As she dropped into the boat, it seemed as if she were to fall into a black pit. Helena saw her grandmother and mother get into the boat. The boys were already at the oars. The father stood, with his arms upraised, to catch her when she jumped. She hesitated.

"Come!" cried her father.

There was a sudden blast of wind; a louder roar of waters. Farmer Brown lost his grasp on the wall of the house, his lantern fell into the water, and Helena jumped.

At that instant the boat was wheeled away in a huge mass of drift-wood, and Helena fell into the rushing stream.

When she came to the surface, darkness and cold were around her. She kept her hand under water, and saw at a glance that she was not far from the lighted window of her father's house. She could not reach it; it was too far away. She was not frightened. How troubled they would all feel about her, she thought. And then, if her mother could never find her body!

Then the weight of her clothes seemed to drag her down again. She grasped the little medal of Lourdes that hung around her neck, and began the Act of Contrition—

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins—" And she went down.

Before she had quite realized it, she found herself tightly grasping the window-sill of her father's house. Helena had strong arms. In an instant she had drawn herself up and climbed in through the open window. Once in, she fainted. She was almost frozen when she recovered. It did not take her long to get warm clothes on. It happened that the only change of clothes she had was the gala costume she had worn on the Feasts of the Church in her native village. She knelt before the image of the Help of Christians, who had saved her when death seemed to be inevitable. No human hand was near; her best friends had been carried away by the flood, but her Mother was always near. Helena thanked the dear Child Jesus for giving her such a mother.

Until daylight the storm raged and the flood rose. Helena was driven up into the attic. There, like an imprisoned dove, she sat on the wide window-seat watching the flood beneath her, and praying that the dear ones might be safe.

When daylight came, Helena saw strange objects float past; a baby's cradle empty, a horse struggling with the flood, a raft with a whole family upon it, and lastly a table turned upside down was pushed against the house and jammed there by drift-wood. And in this table, wrapped in a shawl, was a little child. Helena bent out the window and seized it with both hands. The little waif, quite warm in its wrap, smiled and caught Helena around the neck.

Helena recognized at once the shawl upon this little child. It was the one her grandmother had given to Mrs. Schwartz at Castle Garden.

Helena hugged the little creature very tight, and prayed now that somebody might come to save her and her charge. The little girl was the same blue-eyed, golden-haired little creature, and she seemed to know Helena.

* * * * * *

"Ach, mein Liebchen!"

It was Frau Ida who spoke. Helena and the baby were kissed and embraced by about a hundred people, grouped in Farmer Brown's high and dry barn.

The boat had been unable to approach the house during the hours of darkness, on account of the rushing drift and the need of rescuing others, who, like Casper's family, had been sur-

prised by the flood. But at last it had reached the house.

Shall I tell you how happy Casper was when he saw Helena's face at the window?

Shall I tell you how the boys yelled?

Shall I tell you how the mother and grandmother wept and thanked God?

But I cannot. Put yourself in Helena's place and fancy it all.

So far, the mother of the little baby has not yet appeared to claim it. If she is dead, Helena will take care of it. She asked her father if she might, and he said, "Yes."

I can tell you, however, that when the flood went down Casper had much to be thankful for. Some of his green-houses, built on a high knoll, had not been touched by the rising water. The grapes were safe, although the green-house near the dwelling was destroyed.

Kind people helped him; and, with strong hands and willing hearts and trust in God, they are getting ready to build up all that the flood tore down.

As for Helena, she grasps tight her "child of the flood." It is due to the Mother who saved her that she should be a mother to this little one.

And her father, poor as he is, says she is right.

MR. KALBFLEISCH.

I.

THE NICEST PEOPLE IN THE MARKET.

THE old market was not a pleasant sight at night. Rats ran in and out among the wooden stalls. Broken baskets and heaps of refuse vegetables lay on the brick walk. The bright red of the tomatoes, the green of the apples, and all the colors which make a well-kept market pleasant to look at, were absent at night.

There were no flowers on Mrs. Jameson's counter; her roses and geraniums were under shelter. The old man who sold grated horse-radish had gone home. Mrs. Jameson and the old horse-radish man were the nicest people in the market, except Mr. Kalbfleisch, the butcher, who always gave the Little Sisters of the Poor an overflowing hamper, and was very rough and kind to everybody.

Mr. Kalbfleisch was a ruddy man—why are butchers always ruddy men?—and he growled constantly. But if you looked into his eyes when he said "No," you could easily see that he meant

"Yes." Some people were afraid of him, and he knew it. He liked people to think he was a bear.

II.

THE ORPHANS.

When Charles O'Meara left Ireland with his two boys, Charley and Willie, everybody in Ballygow said it was a good thing to do. His wife had died two years before. He was a strong man and an honest man; he had worked on a farm near Ballygow, and everybody in Ballygow said that a strong, honest, industrious man like Charles O'Meara, had only to cross the ocean to make a fortune. He had only enough money to pay his passage and a pound or so above that, but he went, and the two boys with him.

Charley was ten and Willie eight years of age. They were good boys—more obedient than boys usually are, and they loved their father devotedly.

Their father, after landing at Castle Garden, found a place to board for himself and the boys, in Greenwich Street, with a kind Irish family. This kind family did not ask him for any money at first. He might wait two or three weeks, until

he found a "job." He found a job at last. He found, too, that things had changed in America, and that jobs were hard to get. But he earned enough to pay the boys' board and his own, and, after a time, Mr: Kalbfleisch, who was never tired of saying he hated the Irish, had Charley and Willie employed in sweeping out the market twice a week.

At first, the boys were afraid of the butcher. But, as poor Mr. O'Meara began to grow sick from hard, ceaseless carrying of the hod up shaking ladders, they got into a habit of telling their sorrows to Mr. Kalbfleisch, who boarded in the same house. And, when Mr. O'Meara and the boys took a room of their own, and kept house for themselves, the butcher had acquired a way of saying—

"Take that sirloin steak home, you young rascals. You're no use except to eat and be lazy. Go, or I'll lose patience!"

On these occasions, which became more frequent, as Mr. O'Meara grew paler and the red flush on his cheeks redder, Charley would cook the steak in his best manner. But it made the poor boys' hearts ache to see how little their father ate. Soon the time came when Mr. O'Meara could do no work. He lay still in the close little room, his face growing whiter, his

eyes brighter, and his cheeks more flushed than ever.

Mrs. Jameson used to send a bunch of flowers to him every day. He always asked Charley to put it in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin on the mantel-shelf. Only one thing seemed to trouble him. What would become of the boys? He knew too well the dangers that surrounded them in a big tenement-house. He knew the temptations that lay in wait for them.

"Oh," he said, over and over again, "I wish I could take the boys with me! Why did I ever leave Ballygow? Sure they were safer there, among their own people, where a bad word or a curse was never heard! Oh, why did we come at all, at all?"

"Dunder und blitzen!" Mr. Kalbfleisch would exclaim, when he heard Mr. O'Meara cry out in this way. "You shut up, old man. I'll see that the young good-for-nothings get enough to eat when you're gone."

"But who'll see that they go to Mass and to confession. Mr. Kalbfleisch, you're a good friend, but can't look after the boys' religion."

Mr. Kalbfleisch grunted. He said he was a Protestant, but he never went to church.

"What do they want of religion?" he asked.

"Religion doesn't pay. I'm as good a man as anybody I know, but I'm not religious."

Mr. O'Meara shook his head.

"You're a kind man, Kalbfleisch, and you've many prayers from the Little Sisters to help keep you straight, but a time will come when your natural goodness will give way, if religion doesn't support it."

Mr. Kalbfleisch laughed.

Two days after this dialogue Mr. O'Meara died, longing with his last breath for Ballygow, and praying that the boys might rather die than commit a mortal sin.

Poor boys! On the night of the funeral they had to sweep out the market as usual. Tired with weeping, they fell asleep beneath the stars. They dreamed of their father, and awoke with a shiver, to find him dead.

III.

AN INCIDENT.

Charley and Willie, after a time, forgot their first grief. But they did not forget their father. Charley's Sunday jacket had become threadbare, and he was slowly saving up his spare cash to

buy a new one. He did not buy it, however; for, when the fall came, he concluded that his overcoat would cover it; and he went to Father Maguire and made his savings an offering for Masses for his father's soul.

The priest did not want to take the money.

"Sure, Father," Charley said, "there'd be no need in my having the Masses said, if I didn't deny myself something. If you say the Masses, your charity would be helping father's soul out of purgatory, not mine. And you need money, Father. Sure, old Pat Regan couldn't have paid his license for selling cigars in the market, if you hadn't helped him. And, if you hadn't the money to help him, he'd have starved!"

Father Maguire reddened. The paying of old Pat Regan's license was one of the good deeds his left hand was always doing without the knowledge of his right.

Charley and Willie kept the old room. Through the good offices of the old horse-radish man, whose son was a telegraph operator in the Western Union building, Willie got a place as district messenger. He looked very well in his neat blue uniform. It was a dangerous occupation, for he was obliged to be out late at night and to go to all kinds of places; but Charley saw that he assisted at Mass regularly and received

the Sacraments every month, so no real harm came to the boy.

Charley no longer swept the market. He had been promoted to be assistant to Mr. Kalbfleisch. Mr. Kalbfleisch was making money. Having saved a good round sum, he invested it in a large drove of Western cattle. He managed to sell the cattle at a large profit. He found only one fault with Charley, who was beginning to become as plump and rosy as a young butcher should be. Mr. Kalbfleisch said he was too religious.

"Ach!" he said. "Der knabe is an old man. He goes to church every Sunday; he keeps me waiting for him on his holy-days, when he goes to his Mass. He will change. They all do. Religion is good only for old women."

One day, in the middle of winter, Mr. Kalbfleisch was in a very good humor. He intended to go that night to the ball of the Germania Butchers' Association, and he was full of anticipation. All his brother butchers, with their wives and daughters, would be there. Besides, he had sold two big droves of cattle, at a large profit, for three thousand dollars.

It was Saturday, and a busy day. About dusk, customers became fewer. A tramp lounged up to the stand, and Mr. Kalbfleisch pulled out a roll of bills and threw him a dollar note, calling

him several bad names as he did so. The tramp —a battered, dissipated-looking man—looked at the roll of notes with greedy eyes.

"Don't you wish you had these?" asked the jolly butcher, on whom all things seemed to smile just then.

"Indeed I do!" said the tramp.

Mr. Kalbfleisch, having had no time to go to the bank during the day, locked his money in a little tin box and put it in the closet of his stall. Charley did not approve of this. It was unsafe, he said.

Mr. Kalbfleisch laughed.

"Dry up, old man!" he said. "You'd better come to the ball."

But Charley said no. He intended to go with Willie to confession, over at St. Peter's.

Mr. Kalbfleisch went off, in high good humor. The tramp came into the market as soon as he and Charley had disappeared, and sat on the meat-block for a while, whistling. A policeman passed and spoke to him. Then he crouched down behind the meat-block. When the policeman passed again, he thought that the tramp had gone away.

Soon the first tramp, who whistled at intervals, was joined by another tramp.

Willie went home, after confession. He had to report for duty at nine o'clock, and he wanted

to rest awhile. Charley, feeling vaguely uneasy —for he had the key of the closet in the stall— strolled down to the market

There was no moon. The market looked like a dark cave. There was no sound, except the gentle ripple of the river and the distant shrieks of fog-whistles.

Charley thought he heard a whisper. He paused behind Mrs. Jameson's stall.

"Can't do it without a chisel. Your pen-knife's no good, Sam."

"What's to be done?" said another whisper.

There was silence. Then a sound of scraping.

"Can't open the lock, Sam."

"S'pose we go and try to buy a chisel from the lodging-house man."

There was a slight rustle, and two men softly crawled out of the market into the street, and straightened themselves up in the shadow of the sheds. One stood at the corner to watch. The other ran away.

Charley knew what it meant. He said to himself that he would lose time in going for a policeman. He did not know where to find one.

He went up to the stall, hastily unlocked it, and took out the tin box. He fancied that the man at the corner was watching him. There were several other sums of money in the drawer.

Charley crept with the tin box to a large rat-hole in the side of the wharf. He thrust the box into the hole with some effort. Then he went back to the stall for the packages of small change and the receipts of the day.

He put his hand into the drawer of the closet and gathered the money together. There was more there than one hand could grasp.

He had turned to move away when a hard blow struck him on the shoulder and a lighted match was flashed in his face.

"Is it a cop?" whispered a voice.

"No," was the answer. "It's the young one. And the money's gone!"

The second speaker opened a dark-lantern, and, in the light, Charley recognized the tramp to whom Mr. Kalbfleisch had given the dollar.

Charley pushed the rolls of money into his pocket. The new-comers seized him by his shoulders; one of them put a hard hand on his mouth.

"Now, young fellow, we'll search you—No, it's not here, Sam. There's a good deal in this pocket, but there's more in the tin box, I heard 'em talk about. Where's the tin box, young fellow?"

The hand was drawn away from his mouth, to give him a chance to answer. The man addressed as Sam held a pistol against his head.

"You know what you'll get, if you hollow."

Charley did not speak. He had resolved to die rather than to betray his trust.

"Where is it? I'll pull the trigger! One!"

Charley did not speak.

"Two!"

Charley began an act of—

"Three!"

Just then the sound of a policeman's club struck upon the sidewalk reached their ears.

"Take that, you cub!" cried Sam. "And that!"

He struck Charley three heavy blows with the butt of his pistol on the head.

Charley felt the hot blood gush into his eyes. A sudden pain shot through the top of his head. Then there followed a strange, horrible dream, and then nothing at all.

IV.

ON THE WHARF.

The news of the robbery reached Mr. Kalbfleisch just as he was stepping out to head the grand march, at the ball, to the music of "Die Wacht am Rhein."

When he was told of it, he rushed down to the market. Two policemen were guarding the spot. Mr. Kalbfleisch behaved as if he were mad. He looked at the empty closet and moaned.

"All gone!" he said. "All gone! Verloren ist verloren. Ach Himmel!"

He was in despair. Mr. Kalbfleisch felt that, his money gone, there was nothing worth living for. And it was all gone!

He listened to what people said, but he paid no attention to it. His hard savings were gone!

He would never get them back again, he was sure.

Mr. Kalbfleisch had no religion, and in this loss there was no consolation. He had never been a miser; he had always been generous when he had money; but he felt that, without money, he could not live. He did not believe that the detectives could get his money for him again.

After his statement had been taken by the magistrate, Mr. Kalbfleisch, his fine clothes all disheveled, wandered down to the river again.

What was the use of living? he said to himself. It was very well for Catholics, like Charley, to talk of religion; but he did not see anything left for him on earth, when his money was gone. He looked at the river, took off his coat and

diamond pin and laid them on the wharf. He paused a moment, and hastily writing on a card very unsteadily in the dark these words, "For Charles O'Meara," he stuck the pin into the card, and put both into the pocket of the coat.

Fear seized him then. If what the Catholics said were true, he was about to cast himself into hell. And at that moment he felt it must be true. But he could not live without his money. He made a spring forward and reached the edge of the wharf.

V.

WHERE'S CHARLEY?

Mr. Kalbfleisch felt there was no hope for him in Heaven or earth. He had loved money above all things, and the object of his love had disappeared.

He had, out of good nature, helped the O'Meara boys and given donations to the Little Sisters of the Poor. These were the only good deeds he had done. But the Little Sisters had prayed for him, and he was to be rewarded for his kindness to the O'Mearas. In another moment, he would have taken the plunge into the

dark waters of the river. In another moment, he would have cut himself off forever from God.

He felt his arm grasped. He turned and saw dimly through his blood-shot eyes Willie O'Meara.

"What are you going to do?" asked Willie, breathlessly, for he had been running. He had just been sent out with a message to a steamer which lay in the bay, and as he jumped out of the boat and ran along the wharves, he saw Mr. Kalbfleisch.

"It's none of your business," said Mr. Kalbfleisch, trying to shake him off. "Let me go!"

"I won't!" said Willie, holding on to the butcher's thick arm with both hands. "You mean to kill yourself, sir! There's a policeman under that gaslight in the slip. I've only to call out, and he'll nab you. You know what that means? Under the new law, here in New York, they put anybody in jail that tries to kill himself. Come along!"

Willie was very nervous; but he tried hard not to show it.

Mr. Kalbfleisch hesitated. He was more afraid of jail than he was of the dark waters before him.

"Let me go!" he said. "I've nothing left in the world. My money is gone—lost—stolen!"

"Is that all?" said Willie. "You can make more. I'll help you—Charley will help. Don't leave us, Mr. Kalbfleisch; we haven't any father now."

Mr. Kalbfleisch covered his face with his hands and groaned. Willie gently forced on his coat and vest.

"Come home."

Mr. Kalbfleisch shuddered.

The policeman approached them and looked at them curiously. Mr. Kalbfleisch rose and let Willie lead him homeward.

Once there, Willie bustled around, made some strong coffee, and by dint of talking incessantly and promising that the New York detectives would certainly find the thieves, he at last succeeded in getting Mr. Kalbfleisch to bed.

So soon as the butcher began to snore, he went to his own room, pocketing with much content the key of Mr. Kalbfleisch's room.

He knelt down and thanked God and his Blessed Mother for permitting him to do the service he had done for Mr. Kalbfleisch.

But where was Charley? Willie realized all at once that his brother was not in bed. It was plain, too, that he had not been in bed. Where was he?

Charley seldom went out at night—and he was never out so late as this. Where was he? Willie knit his brows and wondered.

VI.

A NEW FRIEND.

Charley lay in Chambers St. Hospital, unconscious. The occasional moan only gave evidence that he was alive. He had been taken there in the ambulance, as soon as the policeman had found him in the market. The doctors were very kind. His clothes were searched, but all they found was an envelope addressed to Charles O'Meara, a rosary, and a little money.

Early in the morning, when Willie was searching for him, and he was still unconscious, two men visited the hospital. One was a detective, the other a tall, stout, good-natured-looking man with an Irish accent.

He examined the occupants of the different beds. Just as he approached Charley's, the boy opened his eyes.

The man looked at him, and then turned hastily to the nurse.

"I would have sworn," he said, "that this

was the face of a dear old friend. But he's only a boy. Those eyes! They are like O'Meara's."

"That's the boy's name," said the nurse, referring to a slip of paper in her hand.

The visitor looked at Charley again.

"It must be," he murmured. "Nobody could deceive me in the face of an old friend. Will he live?"

"Oh, yes," said the nurse. "He is only stunned. We'd send him home, but we don't know where to send him. I'll ask him now where he lives."

It was in vain. Charley could not speak, although his lips moved.

"I say," said the visitor, after a moment's thought, I'll take him to my hotel. I haven't any child of my own, and, if this is O'Meara's boy, I ought to take care of him. Can he be moved?"

One of the doctors was consulted. He said yes. The visitor left his card—

MR. C. DAWSON,

Westminster Hotel.

A cab was called. Charley was dressed and put into it. But all the time he did not speak.

"We'll go to the newspaper office another time, Mr. Osborne," Charley's new friend said

to the detective. "I'd like to see the Herald presses at work to-night, but just now I'd rather look after this boy. Tell the hospital people that I'll be glad to see the boy's friends when they come. Poor fellow! He's had a hard blow."

Charley, seemingly unaware of what was going on, leaned back in the cab.

Once at the hotel, Mr. Dawson put Charley into a large and comfortable room and went for a doctor. He came, shook his head, and prescribed.

On the next day, Charley was better, but he could not speak; he smiled in answer to Mr. Dawson's questions, and tried to answer them, but he could not. He was too weak to hold a pen.

The doctor said that perhaps if he were taken out into the country, a purer air might help to build him up. The boy had suffered no permanent injury, he said; he was only shocked and weak.

Mr. Dawson was impulsive. He had no doubt that it was his friend's son he had found while seeing the sights of New York, which—among the poor and the vicious—are terrible sights. Mr. Dawson, having adopted Charley on the impulse of the moment, was exceedingly

interested in the boy. Unlike most impulsive people, he was constant to his fancies.

"I'll take him to the Riordans," he said.

In two hours after he had made this resolution, he and Charley, in a luxurious palace car, were rushing towards the pretty cottage on the Hudson, where the Riordans lived.

The Riordan family consisted of the father, mother, Agnes and little Clara. Mr. Dawson had known the father and mother in Ireland before he became rich in California, and, as they had been kind to him, he remembered it. He had built this cottage for them, on condition that he should have a room in it as long as he lived.

It was built in what the architects call the Queen Anne style. It was large, yet cosy; warm in winter, cool in summer. A small farm surrounded it. Just beyond, between two hills, where the turquoise blue of the Hudson shone, was a Catholic church and school. Painted on a tile in the front of the house was a picture of the Sacred Heart. Peace reigned within. Each day the Riordans wondered why God had, in his goodness, seen fit to make them so happy.

Mr. Dawson had telegraphed to Mrs. Riordan. The room was ready, and, as Mr. Dawson opened the door, with Charley leaning on his arm, a pleasant sight met his eyes. In the ruddy glare

of the grate-fire sat Agnes and Clara. Agnes held a toasting fork in her hand, and the toast diffused an appetizing smell through the room. Pussy and Clara looked on. The light falling on the intent faces of the children brought out the golden tint of their hair, and deepened the shadows around them.

"Well, pets!"

The children and pussy jumped up. The children were kissed by Mr. Dawson, who also smoothed pussy's back.

Charley was then introduced. Clara stared at him with wide-open eyes. Agnes gave him the hand that did not hold the toasting-fork. A big chair was wheeled up to the fire, and Charley sank into it with a sigh of weariness.

Mrs. Riordan, a woman with a sweet face and a neat white cap on her head, such as she had always worn at home in Ireland, entered, bringing tea on a tray. Agnes, in a very neat and careful way, buttered the toast. Mrs. Riordan then brought out some raspberry jam from a little cupboard, a round table was drawn up to the fire, and, Mr. Riordan having come in and said grace, they had tea in the twilight.

"I want you to make this boy talk," Mr. Dawson said, laughing. They all laughed, too; and Charley even smiled.

Mrs. Riordan, who made it a rule always to have something pleasant to tell at the tea-table, told them that a little boy with a crutch had brought her a bunch of late flowers and then sung a little song. He said his mother was a widow, and that he sold flowers and sung to help her along. He lived in New York, but came into the country every day for flowers. Mrs. Riordan said that she was so pleased with the boy's polite manner, that she had given him half a dollar and all the dahlias in the garden. He had sung his song over again, and Agnes had learned to play it on her violin.

After tea, Agnes took her violin from its nail, and, holding it upside down after the manner of the little Italian boys, played and sang—

"Flowers are sweetest
Plucked in the morning,
Rarest and sweetest,
Plucked in the morning."

"No, no," said Mrs. Riordan. "You did not catch it, Agnes. I'll sing it with you—"

"Sweetest are flowers
Plucked in the morning,
Sweetest are hours
When dew's adorning
Each leaf and spray,—
Give them to Heaven,
First of the day,—

Give them to Heaven,
Kneel down and pray!

Kneel down and pray,
Give them to Heaven,
Kneel down and pray.

Short are the hours,
While we are working,
They fade like flowers;
Then, no work shirking,
All through the day,
Do what we can,
Not sad, tearful,
Wronging no man,
Hopeful, cheerful.

Not sad, tearful,
Wronging no man,
Hopeful, cheerful."

"Pretty and well sung," said Mr. Dawson.

"I wish Willie were here!"

Charley had spoken! Everybody uttered delighted exclamations.

Charley had been interested in the little song; the peace and contentment around him, to which he was unused in the crowded tenement house in which he lived, had made him feel happy. From the bottom of his heart he had sighed, "If only Willie were here!"

Then Charley told the Riordans and Mr. Dawson his simple story. When he had finished, Mr. Dawson kissed him on the forehead.

"You shall be my son now, Charley, for the sake of your dear father, whose footsteps you have followed!"

VII.

THE TIN BOX.

When Willie, after three miserable days, during which Mr. Kalbfleisch had forgotten his great loss for an hour or two in the sorrow of his little friend, got Mr. Dawson's letter, he was almost mad with joy. There was a postscript to it, which made him turn with a radiant face to Mr. Kalbfleisch, who was in the room with him.

"Will you wait here for a minute?"

"Yah," said Mr. Kalbfleisch. "Is Charley found? Wait! Yah! I wait? What good am I now, except to wait?"

Willie ran down to the market. It was Saturday. To everybody's surprise Willie went down on his hands and knees, and, his heart almost standing still with fear that he might not find it, thrust his hand into the rat-hole in the dock for the tin box. It was there.

He ran home, as he said himself, "like a streak of lightning."

"Mr. Kalbfleisch," he cried, "what would you do if I told you Charley had saved your money."

Mr. Kalbfleisch groaned.

"Come now!—What would you do?"

"Don't make fun. Ach, Himmel, I am sick at heart!"

"What would you do?"

"Willie," said Mr. Kalbfleisch, solemnly, "I would believe that there is a God who listens to the prayers of you Catholics and the Little Sisters. Yes, I would!"

"Here it is!"

Mr. Kalbfleisch opened the tin-box and counted the money in silence. Then he dropped it on the floor and cried like a child.

"Willie," he said. "I will do whatever you say with that money. You have taught me that friendship and your religion are better to live for than money."

"But there can be no true friendship without religion. Father always said so."

"So?" said Mr. Kalbfleisch.

He was very thoughtful.

"How well you boys have paid me!" he said, when Willie had read Mr. Dawson's very full letter to him.

VIII.

THE REWARD.

Mr. Dawson built another cottage near the Riordan's. There he, Charley and Willie live. Next year Charley will enter the seminary at Troy.

Willie declares that he will always stay with Mr. Riordan, and help Mr. Kalbfleisch to manage the big stock-farm Mr. Riordan has bought.

The last time I saw Mr. Kalbfleisch, he was carrying, with Mr. Dawson, Mr. Riordan, and Willie the canopy held over the Blessed Sacrament in the Corpus Christi procession.

Truly, God had amply repaid him for his kindness to two orphan boys.

A GUARD OF HONOR.

WHAT a queer little fellow Claus was!

He had a round, fat face, and rosy cheeks of a color you never see in America. Perhaps you would have called him a stupid little fellow, if you had known him. He could say his prayers well and serve Mass, and read a little and recite "The Erl-king." He was never tired of hearing stories. Sometimes dear old Father Jasper, the parish priest, came to visit his mother. Then Claus was happy. Father Jasper would walk along the village street, speaking to everybody, young and old, but saying much more to the little children who ran after him, and out of every house to meet him. How happy Claus was, when the kind old priest let him kiss his hand and asked him how he was getting on with his catechism. Ah! those days! It was a fine sight to see the kind priest taking his evening walk among his people, loving them and beloved by them!

On the great feasts of the Church, Father Jasper would sometimes ask Claus and his sister, Agatha, up to his house. That was a red-letter day. He

told them many stories—stories of Barbarossa, of St. Elizabeth, of the great saints and of old wars, of the Crusades, and he let Claus look at an old missal he had, full of bright colored and gold-ornamented pictures of heroes and saints.

Claus had a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. When Father Jasper told of the Holy Grail and of all the noble old legends, Claus would cry out:

"I want to grow up and be a knight of the Blessed Sacrament!"

Father Jasper would pat the boy's flaxen head and say:

"Wait, Claus, you will have many opportunities of fighting for our dear Lord, but not with the sword. If you go away across the sea, or your brothers and uncles leave you, and"—he added with a sigh—"as so many of my people have gone, you will often have to defend the Blessed Sacrament, for the greater number of the people over there do not believe that Our Lord is with us in the tabernacle."

Father Jasper often said this, but Claus and Agatha could scarcely believe that there were people in this world who did not adore the Blessed Sacrament.

"And," asked Claus in wonder, "are there also little children there who never make their First Communion?"

"Yes,—unhappily, yes."

Agatha told the other children of this dreadful thing, and for a long time afterwards Father Jasper was asked by many little village children to tell them about it. They could not believe, for they had been taught to look on their First Communion as the crowning act of their lives.

Suddenly the Rhine rose one night, and kept rising till death and desolation faced the village. The beautiful river became all of a sudden wild with rage. The villagers knew what was coming, and they fled to higher ground.

It was a sad sight. Cheerful homes were suddenly dismantled. The comfortable hearth was made cold and wet by the rushing waters. In all directions people might be seen running, carrying children, clothes, or furniture. There was much grief and loud lamentations.

Father Jasper had been obliged to go far across the country to visit a dying man on the night before the great flood. The storm arose and he could not get back the next day. No one dared to lend him a boat; he would have started alone down the river to his beloved people, if he had had one.

There had been great confusion on the high ground all day, and so many children were absent from their parents, that Claus was not missed. His father thought that he was safe with some of the neighbors.

The church was the only building not yet buried out of sight by the flood. The waters were gaining rapidly, and the villagers thought in sorrow of the beautiful stations of the cross and the exquisite decorations. But nobody on the high ground remembered that only Father Jasper had the key of the tabernacle. Claus, however, had thought of it.

"Surely," he said to himself, "somebody ought to wait in the church until Father Jasper comes to take our dear Lord away. It is not right that He Who loves us so much should be left all alone."

When the water had risen above the doorsteps nearest the church, Claus crept into the church, and nestled close up to the railing of the sanctuary. It was growing dark, but a glow of rich crimson fell on him from the mantle of a martyr in the stained-glass window. St. Gertrude smiled on him, and the dear St. Nicholas raised his hands as if blessing him.

Claus felt happy. He heard the rush of waters outside. Distant shouts and cries told him that the river was rising higher, and the sounds of crashing walls and falling timber, as the water undermined foundations and swept away buildings, resounded like thunder through the church. The red lamp burned peacefully before the Blessed Sacrament, and little Claus, bathed in the fading crimson light, felt no less peaceful. The water rippled over the floor of the church. Claus crept within the sanc-

tuary rail. It did not occur to him that it would be well to seek safety with his father, mother, and Agatha on the high ground. He thanked the dear Lord that they were safe. As for him,—he must stay until Father Jasper came.

The noise without became more turbulent. The high doors of the church had been burst open by rushing timber, and Claus could see before him a long waste of twilight water and the twinkling of far-away lights, like a starry crown on the horizon.

It never entered Claus's mind that he would die there at the foot of the altar. In fact, he did not think at all of what might happen. He was there, and it was his duty to stay there. How could he leave the Blessed Sacrament alone? Such a thought —the thought of deserting his post did not occur to him.

As the darkness grew, the waters grew and swelled. They were washing angrily against the fourth step of the pulpit stair, and Claus was now on the highest altar-step. The crimson flush had died away in darkness.

Why did not Father Jasper come? Claus wondered whether he could be sick. Soon the waters would put out the red light if he did not come,—but "no," Claus said to himself confidently,—"*that* would not happen. The angels would light it themselves, if it were possible for such a thing to take place."

The noises of the flood were made to appear louder as other sounds grew stiller with advancing night. Claus's love and the red light still burned peacefully. Claus drew out his rosary, and began his prayer. Why was he alone? Why did they all leave the dear Lord in the darkness? Why?—but with treacherous and slow motion the waves washed through the nave; the little flaxen head sank against the gold and white corner of the altar. The gold cherub with upraised hands looked down at the prostrate figure of the little boy. The water moved with the tide; all was silent except its swish-swash over the marble floor and against the walls. All was darkness below the spot where the red light burned.

* * * *

Father Jasper had come down to his people, in spite of the flood,—or, rather, borne on its bosom in a steam-yacht owned by an English traveller, who saw his sorrow and offered to take him. It was nine o'clock in the evening when he reached the place where his flock had found shelter. He found great grief then; and Claus's parents were more sorrowful than all the rest, for Claus was missing. Father Jasper gave them such consolation as he could. The flood had begun to subside some hours previously, and he hoped that the boy might have been carried off to another village by some kindly friend. He was taken by the Englishman

to the church. The water was going down. He waded up the nave to the high-altar. He thanked God that the red light still burned. He mounted the altar-steps, and opened the tabernacle. He turned away with the Blessed Sacrament safe in his consecrated hands.

He had lit the big Paschal candle, for there was no other light to be had. Its soft radiance fell on the dazzling gold of the chernb at the corner of the altar, and on something under it. Father Jasper saw in the dim, mellow light the face of Claus. He uttered an exclamation.

Was the boy dead?

"Father Jasper," cried Claus, opening his eyes, "oh, I have waited for you so long. I was afraid Our Lord would be lonely."

"And so you formed yourself into a guard of honor for His protection," said the priest. "Be sure He will not forget it, my child; and as you have watched over Him, so may He watch over you."

THE DUMB SINGER.

PEOPLE who saw little Philip often wondered what pleasure he could find in life. He lived on the top floor of a crowded boarding-house in New York. He went to work in the morning at seven o'clock, and did not come back to the house until after six. Then he was pale and tired. He took his seat at the long dinner-table, and, while the guests around him talked of politics or the latest sensation of the daily journals, little Philip did not even pretend to listen. He ate silently and then disappeared. He was about nineteen years old, slight, short, and with drooping shoulders. He had a long, white, care-worn face. When his eyes were cast down he looked ugly and uninteresting; for he had white eyelashes, which helped to give his face the appearance of being all one color. But when he looked at you you could see that his eyes were the color of violets, with a deeper and softer tint in them than any violet.

The landlady called him little Philip. She said he had come to her house from the West, recommended by an old friend, and that, though he had grown somewhat in three years, she had become used to that name. He was an orphan and had no relations. He was very shy; he answered no or yes,

when people spoke to him. He seemed to shrink from those who spoke to him; he made no effort to make friends. Sometimes he came to the table with a flower in his button-hole, which he invariably pulled out and hid in his cuff when anybody noticed it, or he thought anybody was noticing it. The lady who sat next to him had been kind to him when he was sick once; he had thanked her in a few low words. One day he came in with an unusually large brown and gold pansy. She was in a gayer mood than was her wont, and she asked him for it. He fumbled at the flower as if hesitating, and then managed awkwardly to drop it into her soup. He jumped up from the table and disappeared. Everybody wondered what such an uninteresting, stupid, sullen being found to live for.

Little Philip was really as unknown to the forty people in the same house as himself as if he were a thousand miles away. In reality, there was the thinnest possible barrier between the heart of this human being and the best of the people around him. Some of them were versed in the ways of the world and knew how to be amiable and attractive to it; but they did not dream of wasting these qualities on the stoop-shouldered, downcast creature they saw every day. They touched the surface and found it rough. That was sufficient. He was ugly, that was evident; he was silent, and they thought he was stupid and sulky. It was generally understood that

he was too callous even to like music, for he never went into the parlor when the boarders sang the popular melodies of the day, accompanied by the notes of a weary-toned piano.

Once he was seen standing at the head of the stairs, while a visitor played the prayer from Rossini's "Moses in Egypt." The landlady, who was going upstairs, noticed that his eyes were very bright and large, and that his hand trembled.

"Why, little Philip," she said, "what's the matter?"

"Nothing," he answered, drawing the white lashes over those violet eyes.

"I was a fool to have asked him," muttered the landlady. "What a queer boy! But he actually looked like a saint in one of the Catholic pictures."

After this Philip's door was always ajar. But nobody played the prayer from "Moses" again. The people in the parlor preferred gayer music.

There was a young man who went to the table and who sat near Philip. He was a bright, handsome, pleasant-voiced fellow. He talked a great deal. He had once spoken to Philip and received a timid No; he made up his mind that Philip was proud and disagreeable. His name was Neal. The boarders discussed everything, and sometimes they argued about religion. One of them said something foolish about the Catholic Church. Neal laughed a little, and lightly answered him; but, growing enthusiastic, made a good defence of the Church he loved.

After dinner, he found Philip waiting at the door for him. Philip tapped him on the shoulder.

"I would like to go to your church with you," Philip said.

"You are very condescending," answered the young man irritably, for he had lost his temper over the seeming impossibility of making the boarders understand him, and he gave way to a desire—although his conscience smote him—to return the dislike which he thought Philip had for him. "You can go yourself if you want to."

Philip made no answer; he stumbled over the young man's feet in turning to go upstairs, and the young man thought that he had never met a more disagreeable person. He said to himself that Philip's request was only one way of being satirical; but he was not sure of this, and the more his conscience whispered that he ought to have been more charitable, the more angry he became with Philip. Finally, he forgot all about it, except that he had a vague increase of dislike for Philip, and he did not hesitate to say one or two unkind things at him.

Young Neal discovered, however, that Philip had found a Catholic church, for he saw him, in his threadbare suit, standing behind the last pew at High Mass on Sunday. He first thought of asking him into his pew, but he resisted the impulse, as he drew off his lavender-colored kid gloves, and spread a silk handkerchief under his knees on the bench.

Perhaps Philip's threadbare clothes had something to do with this.

"He has come here only to mock and criticise, anyhow," Neal said to himself, by way of apology. "I'll not notice him."

The landlady remarked that little Philip went out more than usual; and, after a month or so, he let himself out of the house at five o'clock in the morning, and came back in about an hour. The landlady said to herself that he seemed happier, and once she heard him trying to sing some Latin words to himself in his room; but the boarder next door knocked and jocularly asked him if he were trying to saw wood. "He was queer and no mistake;" he did not try to sing again.

During the winter, he went out very early, and came back for his breakfast about six o'clock every morning. He took his frugal luncheon with him then, and went to work. It was remarked by the boarders that his teeth chattered unpleasantly, and that he had no overcoat.

Young Neal, who went to early Mass one week-day—the anniversary of his mother's death,—met Philip coming out of church. He was surprised and somewhat softened. He remarked that it was a cold day.

Philip flushed and turned silently away. He thought that Neal's glance had rested on his worn clothes, and that his expression had been a satirical

allusion to the fact that he had no overcoat. Then he felt he had given way to resentment. He ran after Neal and tapped him on the arm.

"Well?" Neal said.

Philip's lips moved.

"Well?"

"It *is* a cold day, Mr. Neal."

"It will be a cold day when *you* learn manners," Neal said, boiling with indignation at what seemed to be an impertinence.

Philip stood and watched him as he turned the corner, as if he were stunned by Neal's rough reply.

Neal's remarks at the dinner-table became more satirical than ever; but Philip seemed not to notice them. The landlady, going through the attic corridor one night, after Neal had been more than usually severe on "stupid, insolent people," thought she heard a sob in the cough that troubled Philip at this time. She said again that he was "queer" and would never make a friend, and went on to get out some more blankets, for January had come.

Young Neal went to see Father Cramer, the rector of St. Mary's, on Sunday, the sixteenth of January. He was much interested in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and he wanted to see the priest about a knotty point that had come up at the last meeting of his conference.

Father Cramer shook hands with him, but stopped

him in the hall. The priest's kind eyes and grave smile always made Neal feel what he called "good."

"There's somebody in the parlor; and I don't want to go to my room until my patient wakes up. —Yes, I've a patient up there, and I'm afraid he is dying. He is a strange boy,—sit down here awhile, —he came here suddenly one night in a frightened sort of a way, and asked to be instructed. It took some time to break the ice that seemed to have coated him all over; he gave me the impression of being dumb, though he had the use of his tongue."

"There's a fellow at my boarding-house just like that," said Neal, with a laugh. "And a nasty, mean little chap he is."

"Don't be too hard on him," said the priest. "If you break the ice, you may find pure, limpid water under it, as I did. Well, this boy, or young man,—I don't know which to call him,—became a most exemplary Catholic. He had lacked friends, though he had longed for them fervently, but his inability to express himself, and his awkwardness, turned everybody from him. He wanted to please people, but he always failed. He found all he wanted at the foot of the altar. All the ardor of his heart turned to the Blessed Sacrament. Such love, such faith! But he wanted to express it somehow.

"Do you know Rossini's 'Moses in Egypt.' No? Well, I think it a rather theatrical piece. He heard it sung in the choir. 'I can't sing,' he said, 'but if I

could only play that, I would feel as if I were not so tongue-tied, when I am alone and want to pray. Ah, if I could only play that! It expresses what I cannot say!' He was in earnest, there was no mistaking that; so I told him to come here, and that I would teach him a little to play that old organ in my room. It was slow work. He thought it bored me; but he loved the toil of practice. He has actually been going all this winter without an overcoat, —for he works for a mere pittance,—to hire a small organ for himself."

"Sentimental!"

The priest paused. "Don't take that tone, Neal. Don't let us sneer when we can help it. His progress has been very slow, and he has been much troubled by a cough. This morning, after Mass,—he went to Communion,—he fainted, and we took him up to my room.—"

A soft, solemn sound filled the house,—a sweet, pleading sound, almost human in its tone. It was a prayer in music,—such music as is seldom heard on earth. It was the prayer of Moses, as Rossini in some high, pure moment, away from all thoughts of the stage, may have conceived it.

Father Cramer listened incredulously. "That can't be my old organ."

Neal was touched by something in the music. They went upstairs.

The musician turned as they entered. His face,

in which two violet eyes almost blazed, smiled at Father Cramer radiantly.

"I have found my voice, Father," he whispered joyously, but hoarsely. "I am no longer dumb. It says all I think."

The musician was little Philip. The priest ran forward, for Philip seemed weak and about to totter. He fell sideways on the keys of the organ, and a stream of bright blood flowed from his lips, coloring them. Neal caught him in his arms and carried him to the lounge. His wonderful eyes were fixed, glowing with love, on the crucifix above the organ. He made motions with his hands, as if touching organ keys. He sighed and closed his eyes.

"He has found his voice," said Father Cramer, who knew death well. "He has found more than all he lacked on earth."

"I might have been a friend to him," murmured Neal as he lifted Philip's hand tremblingly, and crossed it with the other on the dumb singer's breast.

"He needed friends," said the priest; "his heart almost broke because he was so greatly disliked. But we are not friendly to talk when we ought to pray for him."

And then Neal joined with all his heart in the prayer of the Church, that he, who so longed to express himself, might be joyfully expressive before God and the glorious assemblage that praises Him eternally.

THE PERFUME OF THE CUBAN LOTUS.

MISS GARDINER'S two sisters had married Catholics, Dermot Riordan and Richard Hackett, and they had adopted the Faith of their husbands. Miss Gardiner had disapproved of this at first; but when she found that her sisters were no less sisterly and that their husbands were honest and honorable men, she ceased to regret the marriages. She was a quiet young woman when they married, possessed of a fair income and a number of prejudices which were only to be removed by actual experience that they were prejudices, and not principles. She read much and she fancied that she was an impartial observer. Her sisters, who had both become enthusiastic converts, plied her with books, from Milner's *End of Controversy* to the *Faith of Our Fathers*. She had a great respect for the Catholic Church, but she had formed the opinion that a "broad" Christianity was enough. She was opposed to the Catholic idea of religious education. It was her opinion that the world had grown so much better and kindlier since dogmas had ceased to hold its people, that orthodox religion was really not at all necessary.

Her nephew, Carroll Riordan, often said that this belief was easy enough for a woman who had

merely to draw her income every quarter. If she had to struggle with the world, things would no doubt assume a very different aspect. At any rate, it was Miss Gardiner's impression that Catholics, in practical life, were no better than other people. And she said many times that a religion which made such claims ought to produce better results in every-day life. She never took the trouble to inquire into the workings of the magnificent works of Catholic charity in New York; she expected her servants—she would employ none but Catholics who attended to their duties—to be models of good temper. "Sarah," she would say, "I know I lose *my* temper sometimes, but then I am not expected to be good all the time. But it is different with you; you're a Catholic and your Church ought to keep you straight." There was no replying to this. As to honesty, Miss Gardiner believed that most people were honest, but at the same time she took good care to see that her bolts and bars were staunch.

The two sisters died young. Carroll Riordan was her favorite nephew. His father went to Cuba, to look after certain sugar interests, and remained there, leaving Carroll, a lad of eighteen, in the care of his aunt. Her other nephew, whose father had died, was at a preparatory school under the charge of a community of priests. Here Carroll had likewise been until Miss Gardiner sent for him. She did

not like Cyril Hackett; he was not handsome; he was blunt in speech; he had light eyebrows and blue eyes,—she detested both,—and he never said a polite thing merely for the sake of politeness.

Carroll, on the other hand, was tall and elegant, olive-complexioned and dark-eyed. Both he and Cyril were well-instructed in their religion. In addition to his other good qualities, Carroll was clever and showed it. Cyril was clever, but, as a rule, he did not show it.

Miss Gardiner, who was growing richer year by year, came to the conclusion that she would bear the expense of her nephews' college course. She did this partly out of good-nature, partly from a desire to make an experiment which she felt sure would prove her theory that a "broad" education produced just as good results as the religious kind. She could not send Cyril to a "broad" college; she had promised his parents to the contrary.

Carroll's father was dazzled by the prospect of having his son's name enrolled on the list of a college noted for its age and for the standing of its faculty, and notorious for the wild and barbarous conduct of some of its students.

Miss Gardiner smiled at the faint objection of Carroll's father that he might lose his Faith. What if he did? she said to herself. He would mingle with the world at Warward College and gain great culture. Mr. Riordan's conscience troubled him a

little. But, after all, he said to himself, that he had been sent to a National School in Ireland and not lost *his* faith. Miss Gardiner had her way. Carroll went to Warward College and Cyril to the Jesuits,—Miss Gardiner paying with great satisfaction for both.

"The Jesuits will have the worst of it," she said, "for Cyril is as obstinate and hot-tempered as he is ugly, while Carroll is as amiable as he is handsome."

She made no secret of the fact that she had made Carroll her heir, while Cyril was to have five hundred dollars a year for life.

* * * * *

As the years went on, Miss Gardiner grew richer, through lucky investments. She bought a place at Newport and presented Carroll to society during the vacations. Cyril was with her, too, during these times of rest, but he was always in the background. He knew that he must work for a living; and he kept hard at his books. Sometimes he was tempted to envy, sometimes to anger; it was hard that all the roses of life should be for his cousin and none for him. Cyril had inherited a hot temper from his father; he was obstinate, and, worst fault of all, naturally inclined to be envious.

If Miss Gardiner—now become a gentle-looking, graceful old lady—wanted an attendant, she asked for Carroll. He might be seen every day sitting opposite to her in her victoria, admired and willing to

be admired, dressed in the latest fashion; and he was a prominent object in all the important entertainments. Cyril was entirely neglected. He had his breakfast alone, he dined alone whenever there was a dinner party, for his aunt said that he "did not know how to wear an evening coat."

Of course Cyril Hackett resented this. He was often tempted to envy and anger—two passions to which he seemed particularly open. He had inherited this susceptibility from his father; but he had learned, too, that his father had overcome one of the most diabolical tempers that ever cursed a man by the means of grace which the Church freely offers to her children; consequently, Cyril did not attempt to excuse himself for indulging in his predominant passions because he had inherited them. He fought, he struggled, he fell, he rose again, and the good Jesuit, his confessor, knew best how hard his life was.

Miss Gardiner watched her two nephews closely. She saw the flash in Cyril's eye and the curl of his lip when Carroll was lavishly praised or pointedly favored, and in her heart she said that her scheme had succeeded; it corroborated her belief in the uselessness of religious education. Certainly Carroll was a very charming person. He was always amiable, always willing to amuse or be amused. His aunt had given him an ample allowance; but she had refused to increase it, although Carroll in-

sinuated several times that he would find it very agreeable if she would do so.

One afternoon towards the end of the summer, Carroll found Cyril under a rock near the ocean, reading.

"We haven't seen much of each other this year," Carroll said, "and we used to be such good friends."

"It hasn't been my fault," answered Cyril; "you've been too much engaged with other people," he added, with some bitterness in his tone.

"I couldn't help it," Carroll said, with a laugh. "I really couldn't,—people like me and I am fond of society; besides, my aunt insists that I must be with her a great deal."

"You must be very happy," said Cyril, saying a prayer and striving to suppress the temptation. "Life is very bright for you."

Carroll Riordan shook his head and drew figures in the sand with his cane.

"No, Cyril," he said, "I am very miserable. If it were not for your narrow life in that Jesuit College,—which I never could stand,—I should almost envy you."

"Why should you be miserable?" asked Cyril; "you have friends, prospects,—your father is living, my aunt loves you as if you were her son—"

"Oh, yes," said Carroll, impatiently, "I know all that."

There was silence. The waves continued to

come in with a force that boded a storm, and their spray almost touched the feet of the two young men. Cyril's white flannel shirt and soft slouch hat were very much of a contrast to his cousin's correct attire. From the glossy silk hat to the brilliant patent-leather shoes Carroll Riordan was what Shakespeare calls "point device in his accoutrements." His nails were delicately pink and carefully cut, his slight mustache was trimmed fashionably, and he wore a bunch of carnations in his button-hole. Cyril, looking at him, felt half admiration, half contempt. Suddenly a most delightful perfume filled the air, overcoming the smell of the salt and seaweed.

"What is that?" asked Cyril. "Was there ever such a delicious odor? Does it come from the flowers in your button-hole?"

"From carnations?" laughed Carroll. "How ignorant you are! One might as well expect to get wine from turnips as the scent of the Cuban lotus from carnations." And Carroll fluttered his handkerchief in his gloved hands. "Cordovas, who left to-day, had just a few drops of this perfume left in a little glass vial. He dropped it on my handkerchief at parting and threw the bottle into the sea. Everybody is wild over new perfumes just now, and it will make a great sensation to-night at my aunt's dinner-party, if I can only keep

the scent from going off entirely." He thrust the handkerchief into his pocket.

"It is very strong," said Cyril; "I have never taken any interest in the present passion for scents, but it is certainly most delicious."

"I suppose they don't encourage æsthetic tastes of that kind at your college," said Carroll, with a half sneer.

"They don't encourage us to be dudes," said Cyril, hotly.

Carroll shrugged his shoulders.

"You should see some of the men's rooms at Warward,—rugs, antique lamps, perfumes burning in censers, statuettes,—all kinds of beautiful things are in them. In fact, as our Professor of Art says, —'beauty is religion,'—and it's about the only religion I believe in."

Cyril raised his face, with a shocked look on it; he came out from under the rock and stood beside his cousin.

"You don't mean to say that you are not a Catholic any more!"

Carroll's eyes fell before the earnestness of the other; he recovered himself quickly.

"What's the use? People don't trouble themselves about old-fashioned religious forms any more—"

"You mean *your* people at Warward," interrupted Cyril, shrugging his shoulders; "people who

believe that science can work miracles and that God cannot! I am not good,—though God knows I want to be!—but I would rather die this moment than honestly admit what you have admitted."

"I haven't been at Mass for a year," said Carroll, flippantly; "in fact, I've taken so little care of my Faith that I am afraid I have lost it altogether,—and yet I fancy I'm just as well-conducted as you are, Cyril, and as virtuous."

The rustling of a gown was heard, and Miss Gardiner came from behind the rock. She wore a white-brimmed hat, carried a lace-draped parasol, and a large pocket-book.

"I agree with you there, Carroll," she said, with a grave and reproachful look at Cyril. "I just happened to hear your last words and I *quite* agree with you. In spite of all Cyril's high *Christian* education, he is frequently envious of you. I have read that many times in his eyes when you have been praised."

Cyril turned his face away from her, and asked for strength to control his anger.

"Is this not true?" Miss Gardiner asked.

Cyril made no reply.

"Sulky, as usual," said his aunt; "for Heaven's sake, control your temper and talk less about your Faith!"

Carroll good-naturedly floated his handkerchief

in front of the old lady. Her attention was diverted at once.

"Where did you get that perfume," she said, taking the handkerchief; "it is rare, it is exquisite! You will give me some, of course,—new and rare perfumes are all the fashion."

"I wish I could give you some, aunt," said Carroll; "but young Cordovas gave me the last drop he had, and then he left for New York. It is the scent of the Cuban lotus,—a magnificent pink flower, they say."

"Too bad,—too bad! I wish I could have had some," said Miss Gardiner, smelling the perfume and giving the handkerchief back to her nephew. "Oh, dear, isn't it hot?" she broke off. "I toiled up to the bank only to find it closed. My attorney paid me a thousand dollars in one hundred-dollar notes this morning, and I wanted to deposit the money,—but it's a legal holiday or something,—it's quite too vexatious,—that's all I know! Now I'll have to keep it in my desk all night, and run the risk of finding it gone in the morning."

The old lady passed on, with a smile for Carroll and rather a grim look for her other nephew.

"Ah, that perfume!" she said. "It is very delicious,—I shall always associate it with you, Carroll."

"I am sorry Cordovas is gone,—he's a jolly fellow, and fond of fun, like all the Cubans; he is in

my set at Warward,—but I've got to pay him five hundred dollars next week," said Carroll, as his aunt disappeared.

"Five hundred dollars!" cried Cyril, aghast; "*five hundred dollars!*"

"A man must have a game of cards occasionally at college," said Carroll, "and I lost the cash. What are you staring at?"

"Do they let you gamble at Warward?"

"Let us!" cried Carroll, impatiently; "who is going to prevent it? But I know that my aunt would never forgive me if she thought I played cards. It's the one thing she made me promise not to do. I'd give half my life for that thousand dollars she is hoarding away; for if I don't pay him next week he'll apply to her and raise an awful row."

"I thought you said he was your friend."

"No, I didn't,—I only said he is a jolly fellow, and of course he has to pay the five hundred dollars to other people. If my aunt finds this thing out, I am done for,—she always keeps her word. You'll be the favorite, then," Carroll said with rather a hollow laugh.

Cyril could give him no consolation; he knew from experience that his aunt always did keep her word; she prided herself on it.

"It is awful!" Cyril said, much alarmed. At the same time a thrill of delight ran through his mind,—Carroll would be abased; his aunt would

see that the paragon was not perfection! He crushed the thought with all his will. "I wish I could help you," he said, "but I have just ten dollars in the world."

"Do you know," Carroll said, as they strolled up to the house, "that if I can't pay Cordovas I think I'll kill myself. What are you staring at now? It's the only way out,—two students at Warward committed suicide last session."

"You are a fool!" exclaimed Cyril, losing his temper. "I beg pardon, cousin," he added, "but you are!"

There was a gleam in Carroll's eye, as he looked back longingly at the sea, that frightened Cyril. He went up to his room, sad at heart, all his envy and bitterness gone. He knelt before his picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel in supplication for his cousin and in penitence for himself. He asked that the example of the Man of Sorrows might guide and strengthen him.

Miss Gardiner's guests left early that night, and she called her nephews into the drawing-room to show them a new picture she had bought. Her study was at the back of this drawing-room, shut off from it by curtains. Carroll was in the study when he was called; Cyril, in his room.

After they had looked at the picture,—the study of a sunset at sea,—Carroll went to his room.

"Oh, by the way, Cyril," Miss Gardiner said,

sinking into a low chair, "I believe I left the key in my little desk in the study. Go and get it for me,—I am tired,—but before you lock the desk, see that the money is safe."

Cyril went into the study. A very graceful little desk of the Louis Seize period, painted with garlands of roses, stood in one corner under a drop-light. The key was in the lock; Cyril raised the lid; the desk was empty; there was no money there! He looked and looked again. He could hear Miss Gardiner, in the drawing-room, humming an old song to herself. He turned cold and hot. A white handkerchief was all the interior of the desk contained. He became sick at heart as he recognized the perfume of the Cuban lotus; the handkerchief, which had evidently caught in the lid, was Carroll's. There was no initial on it; no other sign of ownership; but there was the fatal scent of the Cuban lotus, streaming richly from it.

Here was Cyril's chance to drag down the curled darling from his place. Left to his own natural impulses, he would have done so; and the temptation was strong upon him. But his education had been, since his earliest infancy, against the indulgence of bad natural impulses. He took the handkerchief,—with a prayer in his heart and Miss Gardiner's plaintive song sounding in his ears,—up to Carroll's room. He entered it, a slight knock barely warning Carroll that he was coming. Carroll, who

was standing at the window, turned; his cheeks were flushed and his eyes glittered.

"You took my aunt's money," Cyril said, throwing the handkerchief on the bed; "give it to me; she has asked for it,—give it to me, and I will return it before she discovers the loss. Do not hesitate. I know it was you!"

Carroll glanced at the handkerchief, and defiance faded from his eyes. He drew his aunt's pocket-book from the breast of his coat and handed it to his cousin.

"You will not ruin me?" he said, piteously.

Cyril snatched the pocket-book and dashed downstairs. He could replace it in an instant. But he was too late. Miss Gardiner had become impatient and gone herself to the desk. She turned, her face as white as death, as Cyril entered the room.

"So you are a thief, sir," she said, with a sneer. "Give me that pocket-book! I knew you were evil-minded, but I never dreamed you would steal!"

Carroll, in the door-way behind Cyril, heard these words, and a great weight lifted from his heart.

"For heaven's sake," he whispered to Cyril, "let her think it was you; *you* have nothing to lose!"

No, Cyril said bitterly to himself, he had nothing to lose. He had no father to suffer from his disgrace; his aunt could not have a lower opinion of him than she had already; he would at once crush out all the envy in his nature by making this great

sacrifice; he would be silent. In a second all this flashed through his mind.

"You are a thief!" cried Miss Gardiner, shrilly. "Think of it, Carroll, *your* cousin is a thief!"

Carroll did not speak.

Suddenly Miss Gardiner bent her head under the upraised lid of the desk,—the rich perfume of the Cuban lotus was still there. She had said that "she would always associate it with Carroll." She looked at the faces of the two young men with a keen glance; the truth dawned upon her; her intuition was not at fault.

There was a pause; Miss Gardiner suffered terribly for a moment, and Cyril suffered with her.

"God help me!" she said, covering her face with her hands. "Go, Carroll Riordan, go!—and yet I have made you what you are!"

* * * * *

Miss Gardiner has been a changed woman since the failure of her experiment; she listens humbly to the religious instructions which Cyril Hackett—now a Jesuit scholastic—gives her. Carroll Riordan is in Cuba, an utterly spoiled and reckless pleasure-seeker, without hope and almost without Faith,—the despair of his father's life.

PRINTED BY BENZIGER BROTHERS, NEW YORK.

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